FEMALE FRIENDSHIP:

OR THE

INNOCENT SUFFERER.

A

MORAL NOVEL.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

"Virtue alone is happineſs below,
"And our beſt knowledge is, ourſelves to know."

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MDCCLXX.

INTRODUCTION.

Mr. Pope's maxim, that
The proper ſtudy of mankind, is man.

BEING fully and generally admitted, it neceſſarily follows, that well drawn characteriſtic pictures of life, though fabulous, are a commendable and profitable branch of literary compoſition; as they prepare an attentive, intelligent reader for ſcenes of real action; and if the ſuperſtructure be raiſed from a moral foundation; without which, however beautiful the component parts, it muſt fall before the breath of rational criticiſm; then, while it delights the imagination, it improves both the head and heart: a large majority, eſpecially of the fair ſex, have not time nor talents for the inveſtigation of ab-

ſtract principles in moral and ſocial life; wherefore a lighter kind of ſtudy is eſſential: and even the greateſt proſelytes of profound ſpeculation, may unbend their minds, by peruſal of a well pen'd novel, both with pleaſure and advantage; ſeveral of this tendency might be pointed out, were they not already generally known and acknowledged. It is true, the Spaniſh novelliſts ſtill remain unrivalled, for delicacy of ſentiment, and ſtrength of character; but their pictures being, in general, romantic caricaturas; our lighter and fainter drafts have more original reality to recommend them; though it is to be feared, that many authors, through neceſſity or avarice, exerciſe their pens for gain; and though we have too many inſtances, of wretches ready to propagate vice, for pecuniary advantage; yet,

yet, to the honour of the preſent age, it may be ſaid, that no licentious piece, beyond a half-peny ballad meets encouragement: wherefore the worſt charge that can be brought againſt productions of this nature, at preſent being trifling; ſo that there is little danger of prejudice, ſhould there even be ſmall hopes of improvement to the mind.

Notwithſtanding profeſſed critics launch their mortal darts at every production that iſſues from the preſs, and generally attack the moſt helpleſs moſt unmercifully; the author of what follows, hopes, as he does not lay in any peculiar claim to ſtriking merit; as he profeſſes himſelf a young inexperienced adventurer, warmly attached to moral rectitude, and more diſpoſed to be grave in the cauſe of virtue, than

ludicrous.

ludicrous at her expence; he hopes to gain protection from the ladies, and indulgence from thoſe who examine the piece with a more critical eye: poſſeſſed of this flattering idea, he ſubmits himſelf to public candor, without multiplying prefatory apologies, further than to premiſe, that he has not adhered to a ſtrict dramatic cataſtrophe, which, if a deficiency, he hopes, among others, will be excuſed, as he previouſly confeſſes, that ſome of his characters are introduced merely as foils to others, without any deſign of diſpoſing them according to the rules of poetical juſtice.

FEMALE

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CHAP. I.

Know then this Truth, (enough for Man to know)
Virtue alone is Happineſs below.

POPE's Eſſay on Man.

SIR HENRY SUMMERS was a man by nature formed ſenſible, open, and compaſſionate to the diſtreſſes of his fellow creatures, which he never looked on without pitying, nor was pity all he beſtowed;

he too well knew the pain which that paſſion muſt give a feeling mind (when unaccompanied by aſſiſtance) ever to refuſe his, to merit in diſtreſs. By art his natural ſenſe was refined into wiſdom, and his own generoſity of ſentiment gave him a humane politeneſs of behaviour which gained him univerſal reſpect. By fortune he was bleſſed with an ample ſufficiency to indulge every benevolent wiſh of his expanded mind: luxurious or whimſical ſuperfluity never rendered him incapable of aſſiſting unhouſed poverty. In ſhort, he only regarded his riches as they gave him an opportunity of contributing to the ſupport of deſerving or neceſſitous objects.

While his character was reſpected even by thoſe who were not perſonally acquainted with him, his behaviour

created admiration and affection in all who were. In friendſhip he was ſincere, conſtant in danger, and patient in adverſity, which he more than once had felt. To theſe qualifications he had joined the excellent addreſs of living (which is moſt hard to do) without reproach. Yet, notwithſtanding he was thus endowed with every virtue that can truly form the amiable, generous, honeſt man; he had, in common with all human kind, his particularities; but they were ſuch as rather to be the objects of applauſe than cenſure: His praiſes were too conſtant in the mouth of every one not to reach his own ear, and being well convinced of the ſolidity of his judgment, he expected a due deference to be paid thereto by all who had the leaſt dependance on, or connexion with him; he had a pleaſing dignity of countenance, which rendered him at

once the object of eſteem and reverence; there was a little tincture of warmth and ſelf-ſufficiency in his diſpoſition, which made him rather impatient of controul: yet, after what I have ſaid of this gentleman, there requires no great ſagacity to diſcover, that what all allowed to be his virtues, far outweighed what ſome choſe to call his faults.

Sir Harry, ſo early as eighteen, had contracted an acquaintance with a young lady of fortune, which, in a ſhort time, grew into the moſt diſintereſted love; and being a man of too much ſenſibility ever to think of her on any other than honourable terms, he conſulted her father, who cruelly rejected his propoſals, not from any diſlike to his perſon, family, or fortune, which were all unexceptionable, but on account of his youth; partially imagining, that he could

could not be endowed with ſo much ſolidity, as to fix the volatile, wandering affections of ſo early a period of life, upon one object, however valuable; therefore conſidered his paſſion but as a flight of inconſiderate youth, which, in a ſhort time after the accompliſhment of his wiſhes, would naturally wear off: thus, through an over-refined degree of caution, the anxious father oppoſed the only ſtep which could inſure his daughter's happineſs. Thus it often happens in life, that by earneſtly endeavouring to avoid one error, we inevitably fall into its oppoſite.

This refuſal, of courſe, put a ſtop to the frequent interviews with which the young couple had before found means to indulge themſelves; yet, notwithſtanding it deprived them of the few ſweet minutes perſonal conferences af-

forded, they, lover-like, induſtriouſly found means to hear conſtantly from each other; two of which letters I here preſent to my readers. The firſt, which is from Sir Harry, was wrote the day after he received the refuſal from her father.

CHAP. II.

—— —— Thither write, my love,
And with my eyes I'll drink the words you ſend,
Tho' Ink be made of gall.

CYMBELINE.

Sir HARRY SUMMERS to Miſs AMELIA.

WHAT words, moſt dear Amelia, can expreſs my feelings at this juncture? Why ſhould I inform you of what (I fear) you muſt already have heard—the reception I yeſterday met

met with from your father? He ordered me to forget you. Oh! my Æmily, think what a perſon, who loves like me, muſt feel at ſuch a ſentence: but (thank heaven) I have ſtill one gleam of comfort to ſupport my drooping ſpirits; I cannot think you ever will be induced to join in ſuch cruelty. In that fond hope alone I live. After the repeated aſſurances of regard I have received from my deareſt Æmmy, I ſhould be unworthy the ſmalleſt glimmering of reſpect, were I to ſuppoſe that a ſeparation like this, can alter her generous, tender way of thinking. Yet, though I am fully conſcious of your flattering ſentiments, allow me to feel.—Your own delicate mind will do me the juſtice to ſuggeſt, how far a thought of loſing you muſt affect me: let me avoid it, leſt I ſink beneath a painful weight of apprehenſion.—Yet, can I be thus

divided from you, and loſe the thought of what I ſhould feel from an eternal ſeparation?—Forgive me, if I cannot force it from my mind: admit my fears as a proof of my regard:—but I wrong you to think you'll look upon them in any other light than as the unavoidable palpitation of a heart which loves you to diſtraction.—Alas! why did I ever experience the happy moments we've ſpent together, ſince they now only ſerve to make my miſery the more ſevere?—May you not feel this parting as I do!—Whatever is my lot, may you for ever taſte felicity!—I once indeed flattered myſelf, that I ſhould have been in ſome meaſure conducive thereto; that by my attention to your wants, and conſtant aſſiduity to pleaſe, I ſhould have made myſelf worthy of the heart which I hoped would have given me your hand, and thereby rendered your happineſs complete.

complete.—Oh! what a delightful ſituation, when we have the pleaſing conſideration, that every action of our lives adds to the felicity of thoſe we love!—From this thought there ariſes an unwearied reciprocal deſire to pleaſe, which turns even the common occurrences of life, into proofs of a ſincere and permanent regard. How much more delight do we then feel, than thoſe whoſe breaſts are not ſuſceptible of ſo delicate a refinement? This, my Æmily, is a ſituation I once hoped to have reached; but alas! why do I ſtill think thereof, ſince it can now afford but a momentary ſatisfaction, and only ſerve to make me return to the proſpect before me with more reluctant regret----a proſpect that I cannot think or look on without ſhuddering?—Forgive me for ſaying that under theſe circumſtances; you

will, by ſtill aſſuring me of your regard, add new life to

The afflicted

H. SUMMERS.

To Sir HARRY SUMMERS.

SIR,

ACCORDING to a maxim of the kindeſt mother, (for ſuch I was once bleſſed with) acknowledging a generous, diſintereſted paſſion for a deſerving object, is moſt minutely conſiſtent with delicate modeſty; where I ſhall make no ſcruple of confeſſing, that your letter has raiſed very contrary feelings. Your profeſſions of love are flattering, but your doubts rather otherwiſe. The conceſſions your tender ſollicitations drew from me before our preſent diſagreeable ſeparation I ſhall ever adhere to, even though a father's unreaſonable

diſpleaſure

diſpleaſure ſhould be the conſequence. Let this undiſguiſed effuſion of an artleſs heart quiet thoſe uneaſy ſenſations which too plainly appear in your letter. Once more reſt aſſured of ſincerity on my ſide, as a return for your obliging wiſhes and inclinations to promote and ſecure my happineſs. I could dwell much longer on the pleaſing theme of mutual regard and ſincerity, but that a parent's harſh commands intrude, and hurry me to a concluſion, with this aſſurance, that I am, with inviolable attachment, &c. &c.

ÆMILIA.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Soft Pity is the faireſt flow'r
Heaven e'er planted in the mind;
The queen of virtues, whoſe ſoft pow'r
Can e'en to Godhead raiſe mankind.

OPERA of Tom Jones.

MANY more letters paſſed between Sir Harry and his Æmily; but as moſt of them only contained the ſame aſſurances of regard in other words, and as love letters, no more than love ſcenes, are amuſing to any but the parties concerned, I ſhall not trouble my readers with any more than theſe two, which may ſerve as a ſpecimen of the ſtile and contents of all the others. Let it ſuffice to ſay, that Sir Harry, having made another application to her father, and having received the ſame refuſal, our lovers determined

to

to make a ſtolen match; which being effected, Sir Harry would have thrown himſelf at his wife's father's feet, but the old gentleman abſolutely refuſed to ſee either of them, and taking this imprudent ſtep too nearly to heart, it in a ſhort time finiſhed his days; nor could he ever be prevailed upon to ſee his daughter, but obſtinately carried his reſentment to the grave, as a proof of which, he bequeathed all he was worth to a diſtant relation of his wife's. This accident happening when Lady Summers was pregnant, a miſcarriage was the conſequence, followed by a violent fever, which in a few days put an end to her life: and thus was Sir Harry left a widower at the age of twenty-two, as a mourning monument of the fatal effects of filial diſobedience.

So quick and ſo impreſſing a ſeries of misfortunes caſt a gloom upon his countenance, which it was not in the power of time to remove, any more than the ſettled reſolution he made, on his wife's death, of never entering again into that ſtate, wherein he had been ſo unlucky in his firſt attempt. He therefore lived, as I before ſaid, the object of every one's admiration and eſteem, ſtriving to do all the good in his power. He partook of all the pleaſures of life, without running into any of the abſurdities; and although he was more delighted with the amuſements which he met with at his ſeat in Yorkſhire, as being the more rational, yet when in town, as he conſtantly was half the year, he frequented every public place of diverſion, to avoid the character of a miſanthrope, which, from his ſettled melancholy, ſome few officious people had choſe

choſe to honour him with. He was about the age of forty, when the following affair happened.

Early one morning in February, when on his return from Carliſle-houſe, he was ſurprized by ſeeing a croud of watchmen round his door, occaſioned, as he diſcovered on enquiry, by a baſket juſt then picked up, which, to his great aſtoniſhment, was found to contain a female child, of (ſeemingly) about a month old. On his nearer approach, he obſerved a paper pinned to its breaſt, on which were wrote, in a neat Italian hand, theſe words:

"*Stranger, whoſoe'er thou art, that find'ſt this luckleſs babe, ſhut not your ears againſt the tender cries of youthful innocence, but pity, cheriſh, and receive her; in return for which ſhe will far o'erpay your*

your generous care by her endearing prattle."

This was ſo forcible an application to the humanity of Sir Harry, (than whom no man had a greater ſhare) that he could not withſtand the natural impulſe of his heart, but ordered the child to be conveyed into his houſe, and to have all immediate care taken of it.—Thus to a heart ſo ſuſceptible of tenderneſs, theſe few words pleaded the cauſe of this helpleſs infant, in full as effectual a manner, and perhaps with more ſucceſs, than whole volumes on the ſubject, from the ableſt hands, could have done.

So ſingular an adventure employed Sir Harry's thoughts great part of that time which he would otherwiſe have appropriated to reſt; but this circumſtance,

ſtance, the more he conſidered it, the more it bewildered his ideas: in ſhort, it was an endleſs maze of perplexities. He could not believe thoſe lines to be the produce of any common hand, either from the ſtile or writing, nor did he know any one on whom to fix his ſuſpicions: however, after ſome heſitation, he yielded fully to the humane dictates of his heart, by reſolving to furniſh the child with every neceſſary, and, as ſhe turned out, to fix her in the world. This reſolution afforded him the tacit praiſe of what he had determined; nor was he a little ſtrengthened in his deſign by the affecting ſmiles which ſat upon the infant's countenance, when he went to inquire after it, and give orders for her nurſery. He was juſt ſat down to breakfaſt, when Mr. Modiſh entered the room, to inquire after

the

the company he had ſeen at Carliſle-houſe the preceding evening.

CHAP. IV.

MR. Modiſh was a young gentleman of fortune, by nature endowed with a good underſtanding, but unhappily much over-run with the weed of inattention. He was a diſtant relation of Sir Harry's, who having a real regard for him, with pain obſerved the ridiculous circumſtances of his behaviour, which he always, like a true friend, endeavoured to amend by admoniſhment, wherever he ſaw occaſion. Sir Harry's mind was ſo full of the laſt night's adventure, that the firſt compliments were ſcarce paſſed, when he

he told the whole affair to Modiſh, who having heard him to the end with great attention, taking his hand with a triumphant laugh, replied:—"Sir Harry, "I give you joy. 'Egad, I'm glad to "ſee any honeſt fellow, who has ſpirit "enough to acknowledge his gallantry.—I really began to fear, we were "all reverting to the antideluvian ſtate, "when an amour was looked upon as "a crime. You know, I in particular "was never fond of thoſe primæval "notions, and always thought you "rather too much addicted to them.— "Well! and pray---Now, what happy "girl has had the honour of converting you to my way of thinking?--- "What---it is a ſecret, I ſuppoſe.--- "She bid you not kiſs and tell, ha! Sir "Harry?---'Gad! I began to give you "up for an obſtinate heretic, in whom "it was impoſſible to work a reforma-

"tion.

" tion. Well---I ſuppoſe it is to be
" ſent to nurſe in the country to a te-
" nant's wife, who was formerly your
" houſe-keeper; and when he is about
" twelve years old, brought to town
" as the ſon of a poor clergyman, for
" whom you have a great regard; then
" a few years ſchooling, and a cor-
" netcy in the guards, finiſhes the
" whole affair.- --Well, upon my ſoul!
" you are a happy fellow, who have no
" check upon your pleaſures from a de-
" ficiency in your purſe." —— This gentleman's volubility of tongue was ſo great, that Sir Harry was obliged to let him run on thus far, before he could convince him of his miſtake with regard to the ſex of the child, and which he had before forgot to inform him of; but when he heard it was a girl, after near a minute's pauſe, he cried, "A girl!
" —that's unlucky: however, we muſt
" make

" make the beſt of a bad bargain.---
" Why, ſhe muſt, of courſe, be nurſed
" in the country; and, let me ſee---oh!
" bring her to London as your ward,
" the only daughter of a particular
" friend who died in the Weſt Indies:
" —ay, ay, that will do:—and then a
" couple of thouſand pounds, or ſo,
" may make her the wife of ſome ho-
" neſt citizen, who has more money
" than wit."——In vain did he proteſt the child was not his own; Modiſh could not believe, that any man would thus adopt a perfect ſtranger to him: however, on Sir Harry's firm proteſtations, he began to have rather a different opinion:— " Well, (ſays he) if
" the child is not your's, I think you
" did wron to take any notice of her.
" —For my own part, it is a ſettled
" rule with me, to provide for no
" man's offspring but my own, and

" not

" not even them at all times."— " For
" ſhame, for ſhame! (cried Sir Harry,
" not a little nettled at his relation's
" diſſolute ſentiments) I am ſorry to
" ſee a man, to whom nature has been
" bountiful both in underſtanding and
" fortune, make ſo bad an uſe of either,
" as to be directed, in the performance
" of the moral duties of life, by that
" faſhionable folly, that plea, for the
" commiſſion of every crime, *Cuſtom.*
" Charles, you know I'm your friend,
" and 'tis my friendſhip tells you, that
" however you may have been taught
" to believe otherwiſe by the company
" you have kept, yet be aſſured, upon
" the word of a man who has ſeen and
" knows the world, that chaſtity is as
" noble a qualification in our ſex as in
" the female, though, to our ſhame be
" it ſpoken, in the preſent age it ſeems
" totally excluded from the catalogue

" of

" of male virtues: nor indeed can I
" hardly blame our youths for a breach
" thereof, not only becauſe they have
" never been taught to conſider it in
" the light of a crime, but becauſe they
" have no incitement thereto from the
" only part of the creation they natu-
" rally expect it from, I mean, that claſs
" of females diſtinguiſhed by the ap-
" pellation of modeſt women; a ten-
" der union with whom, in ſome part
" or other of our lives, we all eſteem
" as our *ne plus ultra*; and want of
" chaſtity being no impediment to
" ſuch an alliance, we conſequently are
" not ſo ſolicitous about poſſeſſing this
" virtue as we otherwiſe ſhould be: for
" let a man commit every folly, every
" vice, which youth, intemperance, or
" his impaſſioned inclinations prompt
" him to, and he will never feel the
" conſequences from thoſe who, by the
" coolneſs

" coolneſs of their behaviour, ought to " expreſs their diſlike of ſuch proceed- " ings. On the contrary, amours with " variety of women give a man an air " of greater conſequence, and more " probability of ſucceſs with the reſt " of the ſex. Can any thing be a " ſtronger proof of the truth of this " aſſertion, than that proverbial expreſ- " ſion which we ſo conſtantly hear come " from the mouths of females of every " rank, and of the truth of which they " ſeem all to be ſo well convinced, " *viz.* That a reformed rake makes the " beſt huſband. In ſhort, young gen- " tleman, whatever faſhion or deprav- " ed appetites may dictate, ſpirit with " prudence, and love with virtuous " conſtancy, are the ſheat anchors of " moral and ſocial happineſs."—— " Bravo! (cried Modiſh, after a ſhort " ſilence) pray, proceed:—upon my " word,

"word, Sir Harry, you have ha-
"rangued with the gravity of a bi-
"ſhop: ſo you mean, by this fine,
"grave, ſentimental oration, to make
"me believe, that this girl is not your
"own. But pray, my dear Summers,
"joking apart, do you really look
"upon keeping a miſtreſs in the light
"of a crime?" —— "Sir, (ſaid Sir Harry, frowning, much amazed at the queſtion, after what he had juſt been ſaying) I am obliged to go out at pre-
"ſent, on ſome particular buſineſs;
"if you will favour me with your com-
"pany to dinner, by four, at the
"Thatch'd Houſe, I may perhaps tell
"you ſome more of my thoughts on
"this ſubject."——"Agreed, (ſaid he)
"though, upon my ſoul! I am en-
"gaged to meet Lord Squander, Billy
"Rattle, and ſome others, to dinner,
"at the Shakeſpeare, from thence to

"proceed, in battle array, to aſſiſt at "the damnation of a new comedy; "but you are ſuch a holy witch, (as "the poet ſays) that you enchant ſo- "ciety to you, and I have really now "kept your company ſo long, that I "begin to find more ſolid pleaſure in "hearing your rational diſcourſe, than "in the noiſy mirth of my bottle com- "panions: I will therefore wait upon "you, though, by ſo doing, I ſhall "diſoblige ſome of the honeſteſt fel- "lows (except yourſelf) in the uni- "verſe."——"For which (replied Sir "Harry) I ſhall not be ſorry. But pray, "have you read this new play, which "you thus intended to have ſtrangled "in the birth?"—— "Not I, upon "my ſoul! (ſaid he.) I don't even "know the author."—— "And how "could you, (rejoined his friend) be "cruel enough, for the ſake of a few

"minutes

"minutes diverſion, perhaps to ruin a "man, whoſe only proſpects may de- "pend on the ſucceſs of this night's "piece; even before you can know, "whether it is deſerving of your cen- "ſure or applauſe?"——"Nay, that "(replied Modiſh) is conſidering it in "too ſerious a light. I never troubled "my head about its merit; but it "would be making a riot, which is "my delight. But adieu till four."— And thus they parted; Sir Harry, to go about the buſineſs he had men- tioned, and Modiſh, to take his uſual turn in the Mall; after which, he met his friend, according to appointment, and had the pleaſure of hearing his farther thoughts on the ſubject they had that morning ſtarted; but as the particulars of their converſation never came to my knowledge, and were, I preſume, ſimilar to thoſe already men-

tioned, let it ſuffice to ſay, that Sir Harry, in conſequence of the converſation, was more confirmed in the principles of humanity and protection to his ward, or rather adopted daughter. He went home, his mind replete with thoſe pleaſing ſenſations, of which no one can be a competent judge, whoſe ſoul is not equally expanded, equally ſuſceptible of delicate ideas.

CHAP. V.

—— —— She is young, wiſe, fair;
In theſe to Nature ſhe's immediate heir;
And theſe breed honour. That is honour's ſcorn,
Which challenges itſelf, as honours born,
And is not like the Sire. Honours beſt thrive,
When rather from our acts we them derive,
Than our forefathers.

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

THE conſequence of the converſation which Sir Harry had with Modiſh, as related in the laſt chapter, was an immediate application of his time to the preparation of every thing which might conduce to the eaſe and happineſs of his adopted child, whom he now determined to educate in London, that he might not ſeem to pay any attention to the many ill natured inſinuations which he conſtantly heard,

and ſtill expected to hear, about ſo extraordinary an affair, from the major part of the world. However, equally regardleſs of their cenſure or their praiſe, he ſtill nobly perſevered in the execution of his firſt deſign, with regard to the education of that child, whom (in memory of his once dear partner) he had chriſtened by the name of Æmily, and whoſe benignant ſmiles, whenever he approached, he conſidered as ſo many grateful returns for his humanity, in the preſervation of her life.

As ſoon as her tender mind was adjudged capable of retaining any impreſſions, he prepared maſters to inſtruct her in every thing ſuiting her age and ſex, which ſhe took faſt as 'twas miniſter'd; and he had ſoon the ſatisfaction of hearing her, in unaffect-

ed

ed ſtrains, expreſs her thanks for the many favours he daily beſtowed on her, and which never failed to put him in mind of thoſe remarkable words, which the reader may remember were found upon her breaſt. He was in ſome doubt whether to acquaint her with this circumſtance or not; but judging that a diſcovery of that nature might, from the generoſity and laudable pride of her mind, when ſhe conſidered herſelf as an object of charity, occaſion a reſerve in her behaviour, which would deprive him of the pleaſure of her open and ingenuous converſation, he choſe, rather than run this hazard, to impoſe upon her by an information that ſhe was his niece; and as he always made a diſtinction between a falſity, contrived with a premeditated deſign to do an injury, and one with an innocent intention, he had

on this occaſion no other feelings, than thoſe which conſcious virtue always experiences on the performance of any good action. However, that ſhe might not always remain a ſtranger to what ſo nearly concerned her, he wrote an account thereof, which, with the paper above-mentioned, being incloſed in his will, were committed into the hands of his attorney.

Æmily was now endowed with a perſon far from contemptible; but having affairs of much more conſequence to take notice of, I ſhall not detain my readers with a minute account of thoſe qualifications which can reflect no honour on her nobler parts, being qualifications, (if they deſerve that name) which every woman is equally liable to poſſeſs in as eminent a degree as herſelf; but to her honour be it ſpoken, that,

that, added to agreeable external endowments, ſhe had a mind replete with every amiable virtue.

Sir Harry, now conſidering her in every reſpect as his niece, accompanied her to all places of public entertainment; but ſhe was far too ſenſible, to receive any ſolid ſatisfaction from the enjoyment of any of the preſent modiſh diverſions, except the Theatre, which ſhe conſidered as not only proper for refining our ſentiments and ideas, but as the moſt luxurious treat the human underſtanding is capable of enjoying. No wonder then, that ſhe was an almoſt conſtant attendant there, eſpecially when performances of an edifying caſt were exhibited.

The reſidence of her uncle (that being the light in which ſhe now conſider-

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The reſidence of her uncle (that being the light in which ſhe now conſider-

ed Sir Harry) in Yorkſhire, during the ſummer ſeaſon, to which place ſhe always accompanied him, gave her a full opportunity of purſuing her favourite amuſements, reading and walking; in the latter of which ſhe found an additional pleaſure, being generally accompanied by a neighbouring young lady, for whom ſhe had the ſincereſt affection that a ſimilarity of ſentiment could promote; nor was her generous friendſhip placed on an undeſerving object; ſhe had the happineſs of having it returned with additional ardor. To this young lady, who was the daughter of Sir Thomas Hartry, Æmily opened her whole heart, on every occaſion, with all the ingenuity of diſintereſted regard. She had juſt attained her twentieth year, when an affair, which the reader will ſoon become acquainted with, gave riſe

riſe to the following letters from Æmily to her friend.

CHAP. VI.

The ſupremeſt bliſs in life,
Is the kind, the virtuous Wife:
Love's a ſpark of heav'nly flame,
Lent to warm the human frame.

Air in the OPERA of Tom Jones.

ÆMILY to MARIA.

Albermarle Street.

NOTHING but a thorough conviction of my dear friend's good-nature, and too great knowledge of the mutability of our ſex, to rally me upon my ſudden change, could have induced me to trouble her with this letter.—Oh! my Maria! muſt I confeſs to you, that

that with all my boaſted indifference, I at length am caught? at leaſt I think ſo; and ſo will you, when I acknowledge, that I am afraid to aſk my heart the queſtion.—However ſecure of your friendly counſel in this untried ſcene, I will venture to communicate the circumſtances as they happened.

The appearance of Garrick in tragedy, ſome time ago, induced my uncle, at my requeſt, to take places for that evening; and although he was indiſpoſed all the morning with a violent head-ach, in ſpite of my remonſtrances inſiſted on performing his promiſe, by attending me to the play in the evening; ſo far does this good man, in every thing, prefer my happineſs to his own eaſe. As it was a crouded night, we agreed not to ſtay the farce, and ordered the carriage accordingly. We

had not been long ſeated in the box, before Miſs Martin, with whom I have a ſlight acquaintance, ſeated herſelf behind us, being attended by her brother, a young gentleman of ſmall private fortune, who has this winter been called to the bar, where he promiſes fair to make a figure: but although no one applies more cloſely to his profeſſion, when out of it, he is quite the gentleman, which character very few know, how ſo well to unite with the man of buſineſs. Finding I was no ſtranger to his ſiſter, from his firſt entrance, he directed his converſation particularly to me; but being the only woman in company, except her, (and ſiſters, you know, are nobody) I only thought it what every man would have done in the ſame caſe, and therefore, at that time, conſidered it in no other light than as common civility. Our diſ-

courſe

courſe naturally turning upon the exhibition before us, the juſtice of his remarks, added to the apparent diffidence with which they were uttered, gave me as high an opinion of his judgment as I before had of his addreſs and perſonal behaviour. Added to theſe, he is furniſhed with a mind ſuſceptible of the moſt delicate feelings; for, would you think it, my dear? he was even unfaſhionable enough to weep at the imaginary repreſentation of diſtreſs: as if aſhamed of his weakneſs, he for ſome time endeavoured to conceal the emotions of his ſoul; but in vain: nature got the better of art, and ſhewed the unaffected goodneſs of his heart in its true colours. I do not know whether it was from ſympathy, but I never was more affected at a tragedy in my life: he perceived it, and I had the ſatisfaction of being complimented by him on the

the tenderneſs of my paſſions. Surely this man knows my very thoughts, for he did not once ſeem to pay the leaſt attention to my perſon: if he has any deſign upon my affections, this is his only way. Your Emmy would hold that man unworthy a place in her heart, who could be captivated by her perſon only; ſuch love can have no ſtability: every day will ſhew new beauties to his eyes, each of whom will blot the remembrance of the former from his heart; and thus, admiring all, he really regards none. But a man, who prefers us for ſome ſuperior excellence of mind, will, when in poſſeſſion of our perſons, have daily opportunities of ſeeing the improvement of the former; and thus, with love and reaſon both combined, we ſpread a toil too dear for him to break. How cautious, then, how very cautious ſhould we be, not to fix our affections

affections on a man, who probably may abuſe the confidence we place in him. When the indiſſoluble knot is tied, we are no longer preſerved under the foſtering wing of an indulgent parent; friends and relations, all give up the joint care they have had of our happineſs, and center it alone in the will of a huſband: to him we muſt on all occaſions fly for aſſiſtance, which if he refuſes, we indeed are miſerable.

And yet, my Maria, what hazard, what riſque do we not run, in the choice of that man, who is to preſide over every future action of our lives? for there are a ſort of men, who think women made but for their pleaſure, as a domeſtic convenience, to riſe at their ſmiles, or ſink at their rebuke; and then, after ſuch behaviour, are amazed to find the delights of matrimony do not

not anſwer the expectations they have been taught to conceive thereof, and begin to treat every idea of connubial love as merely chimerical, no where exiſting but in the luxuriant fancy of youth, ingenuous to create imaginary pleaſures; thus ridiculing the heighth of human felicity, only becauſe it is a refinement of which their coarſer ideas are not ſuſceptible. From ſuch, kind heaven defend my friend and me!

Although I am not guided by a blind miſtaken partiality for my own ſex, yet I acknowledge myſelf to have ſo good an opinion of the generality thereof, as to venture to ſay, that if their huſbands would treat them with a tenderneſs becoming the delicacy of their connexion, and not convert the indulgence of an obliging companion, into the rigid commands of an auſtere maſter,

ſter, or the cold contempt of negligent indifference, they would find in their wives all their fond hearts could wiſh, *obedient helpmates, faithful friends, and agreeable companions.*

Do not, from what I have above ſaid, imagine that I am mad enough to think, there is nothing required of us in this arduous ſtate; ſo far from it, I am convinced that, were we to ſpend our whole lives in the conſideration of what is proper to be done, there would ſtill be ſomething wanting in our conduct, to ſupply every duty incumbent on a good wife; and this very circumſtance ſeems deſigned by providence, to augment our felicity; for if there were no faults, we ſhould loſe all that heart-felt ſatisfaction ariſing from a reciprocal forgivement thereof. But above all let us remember, that we

ſhould

ſhould retain the Lover after we become the Wife, and not, when we commence the one, entirely diveſt ourſelves of the other; for if we do, how wide will be the difference!—where that tender ſoftneſs?—where that amiable, engaging compliance, we made uſe of to appear agreeable before marriage? and as we did it then only perhaps to ſatisfy a girliſh vanity, how much more ſtudiouſly ought we to uſe our moſt careful aſſiduity to pleaſe, when all our domeſtic happineſs depends on the firm poſſeſſion of our huſband's affections. Let us therefore, by our wiſhes, ſtrive to intercept his will; and, according to the maxim in the ſong,

"While each with tender paſſion burns,
"Aſcend the throne of rule by turns;
"And place (to love, to virtue juſt)
"Security in mutual truſt."

The PADLOCK.

But

But my zeal for the happineſs of the reſt of my ſex, has almoſt made me forget to proceed in my ſtory.

At the concluſion of the play, my uncle went out to enquire after the carriage, promiſing to return immediately; but after having waited ſome time, you may imagine how amazed I was to ſee nothing of him, nor could I help expreſſing my aſtoniſhment thereat to Miſs Martin, who, as well as her brother, ſtrove with all the tender concern they could to quiet my fears; but in vain. During the whole time of the entertainment, I was agitated with the moſt dreadful apprehenſions, inſomuch that the curtain had dropt ſome time before I diſcovered it.—— In this dilemma, Mr. Martin inſiſted on ſetting me down, which, in ſuch a ſituation, I could not refuſe; he therefore

fore handed me into the paſſage, where the croud was too great for us to proceed, and his eagerneſs to extricate us from this difficulty led him ſo far, that, by ſome accident, a chairman, in ſhifting one of his poles, let it fall upon his head, from whence the blood immediately guſhed in a great quantity. You may more eaſily imagine, than I can deſcribe, the conſternation this threw both his ſiſter and me into, our fears interpreting the danger to be greater than it really was, which, he aſſured us, was very trifling, and notwithſtanding our moſt earneſt entreaties, could not be prevailed on to accept of any aſſiſtance till he got home; but turning to his ſiſter, deſired ſhe would lend him her handkerchief, ſomebody in the croud having been civil enough to borrow his; but I being the quicker of the two, (and, I am afraid, almoſt as much concerned

concerned for his ſafety) before ſhe could find her's, had offered him mine, which he politely accepted; and having bound it round his head, with ſome difficulty ſeated us in the coach.

On our arrival at Albermarle-ſtreet, I enquired after my uncle, and had the ſatisfaction of hearing that he had been taken ill, on the ſudden change from ſo intenſe heat to cold; but that, to my heart-felt eaſe, he was again recovered, and had arrived juſt before me. On hearing this, Mr. Martin begged leave to enquire after his health, the next day; which I could not refuſe, but deſired that he would not, out of complaiſance to enquire after the ſafety of others, endanger his own, by coming out too ſoon; and intreated he would let me know how he did in the morning; which having promiſed, they

took

took their leaves, and left me at liberty to viſit my uncle, who, I found, had no remains of his diſorder but a violent head-ach.

Mercy on me! to what an unconſcionable length have I extended this ſubject! but we are apt to dwell on pleaſing themes, without conſidering the leiſure or patience of a correſpondent. However, I think it is now high time for me to conclude, with an aſſurance of your ſoon hearing from me again; and that however I may be employed in the delightful taſk of duty and of love, there will always be room left for my Maria, in the heart of her ſincereſt friend,

ÆMILY SUMMERS.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

To be obliged to compound with my duty! aſham'd to look my uncle in the face! to bluſh at his confidence, and be humbled by his kindneſs! to feel the irkſomeneſs of receiving praiſe, which I am conſcious I do not merit! What a ſtate for an ingenuous mind!

The SCHOOL for RAKES.

ÆMILY to MARIA.

Albemarle Street.

AGREEABLE to my promiſe, I again take up my pen, to proceed in what your vivacity will call a romantic adventure. After parting with Mr. Martin, I went to bed, but without inclination to ſleep. The compoſure I had always hitherto felt, on repairing to reſt, was gone, and in its room had left ten thouſand doubts and fears,

fears.—According to my cuſtom, upon a ſtrict examination into my actions of the day, I found in my heart ſenſations which I dared not give way to, nor could totally ſuppreſs: in ſhort, I found my happineſs depended on the actions of a man, who as yet had never, and (what was worſe) who perhaps never intended to ſpeak to me, on any other footing than that of a common acquaintance. Shall I confeſs to you, that this thought affected me ſo far as to hinder me from taking my natural reſt? I therefore roſe in the morning, pale and unrefreſhed, my uſual ſprightlineſs ſupplanted by a melancholy dejection, almoſt too much for me to bear. My uncle immediately perceived it, and, with a paternal kindneſs, tenderly enquired the cauſe. To acknowledge the real one was impoſſible: the fictitious confeſſion of having been troubled

with the toothach all night, delivered me from that confuſion which his queſtion had thrown me into; but you may imagine that I did not feel much eaſier, when, after a moment's recollection, my conſcience dictated to me, to what the entertainment of an imprudent paſſion had reduced your friend; the willful deception of a man ſo kind, ſo generous, that hitherto he had always ſtrove to intercept my wiſhes, that I might never know what it was to aſk a favour.——Oh! my Maria!—to what does this love ſubject us! how far does it debaſe the generoſity of our minds beneath its glorious ſphere!—At our births, by nature we are open, ingenuous, and ſincere; our youthful hearts can entertain no thought, no wiſh, which we deſire to exclude the breaſt of any one acquaintance.

I was meditating on the fallacious influence of unauthorized concealed love, when, according to my expectation, the ſervant announced Mr. Martin's approach. This ſound at once rouſed me from my reveries, and gave me ſpirits to receive him in as diſengaged a manner as the nature of our acquaintance would admit of. I was ſorry to obſerve, that his dreſs (conſidering the time of day) was ſtudiouſly elegant. I am afraid he has either too much of the coxcomb in him, or a worſe opinion of my underſtanding than I could wiſh; as his appearance ſeemed to indicate, that he thinks me capable of receiving an impreſſion from his exterior parts. From your thorough knowledge of my heart, you beſt can tell how much he is miſtaken: and here, methinks, you will call me a whimſical girl, for troubling my head

ſo much about a man, whom as yet I had never ſeen but once.—Why, that indeed is very true; but in that once, his eyes as plainly ſpoke the language of his ſoul, as if he had told me that he loved; for, in his whole behaviour, there was a delicate attention to my every word, which was more perſuaſive eloquence than any he could uſe.

Some few compliments had paſſed between us, when my uncle entered the room, to whom I introduced Mr. Martin, as the gentleman to whom I was ſo much obliged for his aſſiſtance the preceding evening. With his uſual politeneſs, he made him many acknowledgements for his behaviour, and, in a ſhort time, inſenſibly fell into a converſation, which ſeemed to promiſe an intimacy; nor was I miſtaken in my con-

conjectures; a general invitation to Albemale-ſtreet was the conſequence, at which, I will confeſs, I was not a little pleaſed; and, in order to ſtrengthen this growing connexion, I ſent by him a meſſage to his ſiſter, intimating that I ſhould be proud of a ſtricter acquaintance with her: after which he took his leave, not without firſt having made a very ſignificant bow to me;—at leaſt my vanity conſtrued it as ſuch.

You may imagine he did not neglect the invitation he had received: few days paſſed in which we did not ſee him; and my uncle in a ſhort time conceived ſo cordial a fondneſs for him, that he ſcarcely ever ſeemed to have enough of his company; he was one in all our parties at home, and attended us to every public place; and though he did not pay me the common com-

pliments which moſt of his ſex uſe to our's, ſtill there was a certain delicacy in every word, which too plainly aſſured me, that he regarded me with other eyes than thoſe of a mere acquaintance: and I will acknowledge, that I daily expected a declaration of his paſſion, nay, that I even wiſh'd it, though I was not without my fears, leſt my uncle, on account of the ſmallneſs of his fortune, ſhould oppoſe his inclinations, and thereby deprive me of his company, which I now enjoyed with unlimited pleaſure.—Oh! my Maria!—what did I not ſuffer from this apprehenſion!—and as he grew every day more particular, every time I ſaw him increaſed my uneaſineſs, till at length, what I ſo long expected, arrived: but I am ſummoned to my toilet, and therefore muſt make this the ſubject of another letter. Adieu!—on whomever I may beſtow

my

my affections, you ſtill ſhall have your ſhare in the heart of

Your's, moſt ſincerely,

ÆMILY SUMMERS.

CHAP. VIII.

Conceit, more rich in matter than in words,
Brags of his ſubſtance, not of ornament;
They are but beggars that can count their worth:
But my true love is grown to ſuch exceſs,
I cannot ſum up one half of my wealth.

ROMEO and JULIET.

ÆMILY to MARIA.

Albemarle-ſtreet.

WHEN once affection is rooted in the breaſt, hard is the taſk to conceal the movements of our hearts

from the dear object. I thus (my amiable friend) begin with a ſentiment, becauſe I think the ſequel of my ſtory will pretty clearly exemplify it: I will therefore now reſume the thread of my diſcourſe, and endeavour to be a little more conſiſtent than in my laſt; but as I was at that time in an unuſual flutter of ſpirits, I am ſure you will pardon me.

The morning preceding to my writing it, I was lolling negligently on a ſettee, peruſing your letter, when Mr. Martin, entering the room ſuddenly, unheard and unexpected, threw me into ſome little confuſion, and in my hurry I dropt your epiſtle on the floor, which, if you remember, was directed by your father: he immediately picked it up, and perceived the ſuperſcription to be a man's hand; after a ſhort ſilence, during

during which various paſſions by turns appeared in his face, "How happy, "Madam, (ſaid he) muſt that gentle- "man be, who can ſo far have acquir- "ed your eſteem, as to be permitted "to correſpond with you!" — Having ſo ſaid, he held it in his hand, as if waiting for an anſwer; but as I perceived a taint of jealouſy in his words and mode of expreſſion, I endeavoured to evade the circumſtance, by enquiring when I might hope to congratulate him upon a perfect recovery from the accident he met at the theatre, which ſtill clouded his countenance with a patch? Seeing through my artifice, he anſwered as follows: "You ſeem, "Miſs Summers, to be extremely cau- "tious of ſaying any thing further on "the letter:"—and, with a kind of forced irony, added, "I am ſure Miſs "Summers's principles would never

"ſuffer her to hold a correſpondence "with any one of whom ſhe need be "aſhamed."—Notwithſtanding the ſatisfaction I at that moment felt, for having awakened the reſentment of that love I wiſhed to cultivate, to ſupport the farce, I could not avoid replying, with an air of negligence, "I do not "think myſelf obliged to conſult all "my acquaintances on the choice of "my correſpondents; and, provided I "have none with whom my uncle is "diſpleaſed, I do not ſee that any other "perſon has any concern in the af-"fair."—Poor ſoul! how engagingly ſimple he looked!—he hung his head, and, with a timid heſitating inferiority, ſaid, "To be ſure, Madam—as you "ſay—I have no right—I once, in-"deed, (added he with a ſigh) flat-"tered myſelf—but, fool that I was, "—what reaſon had I to expect——"

(then

(then with a low bow continued) "but "as I acknowledge my tranſgreſſion, "and ſincerely beg your pardon, I hope "Miſs Summers will for once excuſe "ſo impertinent a curioſity; eſpecially "as in palliation thereof, I can with "truth aſſure her, that I had ſome rea-"ſon for my ſeeming enquiry."—— "Well, (ſaid I) ſince you confeſs your "fault, I will now convince you, that "your ſuſpicions were groundleſs;— "but obſerve—I do this to juſtify my-"ſelf, not to ſatisfy you."—So ſaying, I produced the letter, and relating to him the real truth, ſhewed him your name at the bottom; at the ſight of which, his countenance immediately brightened up; and I will own to you, that I felt an unſpeakable pleaſure, when I ſaw him, under a pretence of a cloſer examination of the direction, preſs my name to his lips with the greateſt eagerneſs;

eagerneſs; after which he returned me the letter, with as much compoſure as if he was convinced I had not taken notice of his laſt action.

The converſation now dropp'd; but this being far from my intention (I am afraid out of a ſecret deſire of urging him to a declaration), immediately took an opportunity of ſaying, "I think Sir "you told me, that you had a reaſon for "your ſeeming enquiry concerning the "letter; ſhall I not come under the pre-"dicament of unreaſonable curioſity by "deſiring to know what it was?"—"By "no means, replied he, as you are the "only perſon intereſted in it, you have "an undoubted right to be acquainted "therewith; pardon me then, dear Miſs "Summers, but my own happineſs was "at ſtake."— "Nay, now (ſaid I) I "don't underſtand you."— "Say ra-

"ther

"ther (reply'd he, with ſome emotion) "you won't underſtand me; and indeed I "don't know whether I ſhould wiſh you, "nor would I ever have informed you "of it, but that I find, notwithſtanding "all my endeavours, it will be impoſ- "ſible long to conceal it from you; in "juſtification therefore of my own be- "haviour, (which I am ſenſible muſt "have appear'd very extraordinary) I "am under an abſolute neceſſity of de- "claring, that from the firſt moment "which I ſaw, I lov'd you."—Oh, my Maria!—what contradictory creatures are we women?—altho' this declaration was my ultimate wiſh, and tho' it was what I had ſo long expected, would you believe, that when the wiſh'd for moment was arrived, I could ſcarce ſupport myſelf from fainting. Perceiving therefore that I heſitated for an anſwer (for indeed I knew not what to ſay, he took one

of

of my hands, and with ſome warmth ery'd, "May I not, deareſt Miſs Sum-"mers, hope that by my earneſt endea-"vours to pleaſe, I may at length render "myſelf not totally diſagreeable to "you."—And much more he then ſaid than I can now remember: it is impoſſible to deſcribe the dilemma I was in; and, to confeſs the truth, the moment was not a little critical.—A fine young fellow at my feet, uſing all the rhetorie he was maſter of, to perſuade me to what before I had no ſmall inclination, (I mean the avowal of my paſſion) was a dangerous ſituation:—Tell me, my Maria, was this a time for heſitation?—Truſt me—No—And I really think that I had great prudence in avoiding a preſent return of his profeſſions; which I did by ſaying, "It has always been "my conſtant rule, and always ſhall "be, Sir, never to liſten to any one on this

"this ſubject, till I have my uncle's "ſanction for ſo doing; it is to him "therefore you muſt apply."—"By "your referring me to Sir Harry, Ma-"dam (replied he) I flatter myſelf that "if I have his permiſſion for the at-"tempt, I may one day inſpire you "with ſentiments of tenderneſs."—Was not that pretty forward my dear?—— However I was determined to puniſh him for his preſumption; therefore with all the conſequence I could then aſſume, I replied, "You have drawn, Sir, a "concluſion in your own favour which "might as eaſily be turn'd to your diſ-"advantage; I mean, that you might "take my reference of you to my uncle "for an abſolute denial; as I think, "you may be pretty well convinced, "that he will never be induced to give "you his conſent."—"I underſtand "you, Madam, ſaid he, the difference

"of

" of our fortunes and expectations; but " I have too good an opinion of your " generoſity to think that alone could " influence you, whatever it might " Sir Harry; for which reaſon I rather " choſe to apply to you firſt, being con- " vinced that were I to meet with en- " couragement from you, he would ne- " ver withhold his, in a point where " your happineſs was ſo nearly con- " cerned." My anſwer to this came of courſe, " Your only way, Sir, to gain " mine is, to ſay no more on this ſub- " ject, till after your application to him; " however of this you may be aſſured, " that as I am almoſt convinced he " will never interpoſe in an affair of this " kind, ſo have I too much honour to " give any perſon a double trouble " where one will ſuffice." Was this ſaying too much?—However, whether it was or not, he underſtood my meaning

ing well; for kiſſing my hand with the greateſt tenderneſs, "My kindeſt "Æmily," burſt ſpontaneouſly from his lips; and ſo he left me to follow my inſtructions with regard to my uncle.—And now my friend, I aſk your advice how to act, in caſe he ſhould oppoſe my wiſhes; as be that as it may, I am ſure it will be impoſſible to hide the movements of my heart from him, who has gained ſo entire poſſeſſion of it; but in your counſel talk not of impoſſibilities; and if you have never felt the influence of a tender impartiality, conſider the difficulty of eraſing one when it is firmly rooted in the heart.—Adieu, ſtrain every power to aſſiſt with your advice,

Your deareſt friend,

Æ. SUMMERS.

ÆMILY

ÆMILY to MARIA.

Albemarle Street.

OH! my Maria, give me joy; I am happy, happy beyond expreſſion; he is mine, faſt as the powers of love and promiſe can enſure him;—oh, the extatic minute when, after long reſtraint the hearts of lovers congenial ſpring to meet each other!—Sir Harry yeſterday informed, me that he had received propoſals from Mr. Martin, "of what "nature (added he with a ſmile) I believe you are not ignorant; I therefore "deſire to know of you what anſwer I "am to give him:"—"Your prudence, Sir, (ſaid I) will always direct "you to what is beſt."—"That's not "the caſe, (replied he) put prudence out "of the queſtion, then tell me, could "you love him as a wife?—if you can,

"he

" he is yours; and tho' your fortunes " will not be large enough to ſupply the " luxurious ſuperfluities of life, it ſhall " be made ſufficient to render two wor- " thy people happy; and you ſtill may " have ſomething to ſpare for the ne- " ceſſities of a deſerving friend, or a " pitiable object; and in this life what " more can be deſired?" In ſhort, in the afternoon I received a viſit from Mr. Martin, and my uncle joining our hands, expreſſed his approbation of the union; at the ſame time, with a benignant ſmile, imploring Heaven to ſhower down proſperity upon our heads.—I was thus, you ſee, obliged to promiſe, that in due time I would, by completing Martin's happineſs, render my own ſo too.—Would you were here to ſhare in my felicity!—for at preſent my joy is almoſt too great to bear with moderation. Adieu; a tumultuous heart ill can furniſh

niſh matter for a long epiſtle; excuſe therefore any more from

Your overjoy'd

Æ. SUMMERS.

*** Though theſe letters are thus placed in immediate ſucceſſion, that the thread of the narrative might not be interrupted, the reader will no doubt obſerve, that ſome time intervened between the writing of each.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Mighty Pan! with tender care
View this ſwain and virgin fair;
May they ever thus impart
Juſt return of heart for heart!
May the pledges of their bliſs
Climb their knees to ſhare the kiſs!
May their ſteady blooming youth,
While they tread the paths of truth,
Virtues catch from either ſide,
From the bridegroom and the bride!

Lloyd's ARCADIA, a Dramatic Paſtoral.

MARIA to ÆMILY.

INDEED, indeed, my deareſt Æmily, there's no bearing this: you are poſitively a horrid provoking girl: one minute you aſk my advice, and the next comes a letter, informing me that you have followed your own inclinations, without

without waiting for my counſel: thus are all the fine things, which I had treaſured up to perſuade you to conquer your paſſion, thrown away, and rendered uſeleſs, by your precipitate conduct. Being determined to give you ſome aſſiſtance, as I cannot addreſs myſelf to you after the manner I at firſt intended, I will endeavour to lay you down ſome rules for the married ſtate, which I hope will not be totally uſeleſs.

Seriouſly then, as my Æmily has always hitherto dignified me with the name of Friend, I ſhould ill deſerve that title, were I to be ſilent at a time when all her acquaintances will ſoon be pouring in their congratulations, on what may juſtly be called, *the moſt important event of her life.* At a time like this, when your heart is replete with joy, I am afraid you will ſcarce have leiſure

to

to attend a tedious homily of grave ſentiments. Sincerity is the trueſt teſt of friendſhip, and, though uncourtly, when well meant claims a favourable reception: the phyſician who adminiſters medicines which may be diſagreeable, and the ſurgeon who probes a wound, as they act upon ſalutary principles, ought rather to be thanked than blamed, for the eſſential pain their endeavours occaſion.

Firſt then, let me intreat you to conſider ſeriouſly the ſolemn nature of the engagement into which you are going to enter; and as you have often, to feed a fooliſh vanity, ſpent whole days in the choice of a new gown, or a ſet of ribbands; how much more attentively ſhould you conſider that general conduct, which is to enſure your happineſs, or miſery!

But

But as a preacher in petticoats is rather intolerable, though my papa ſays there are many old women mount pulpits, I ſhall not endeavour to prejudice you againſt the matrimonial voyage you are about to take, by picturing the many hazards and perils which often attend it.—Be neat in apparel, cordial in behaviour, ſlow to find, and ready to forgive, faults; cautious of hearing that dangerous flattery beauty like your's may produce; follow faſhion, without worſhipping ſo vain an idol; indulge agreeable, harmleſs ſociety; preſerve natural charms by a regular life, without paltry aids of art; ſupport ſpirit according to your income, with that commendable œconomy which caſts at diſtance parſimonious penury: in ſhort, my dear Æmily, ſtrive to make home agreeable, and, with the accompliſhments you are miſtreſs of, if your huſ-

band wanders, he muſt be the moſt ungrateful, inſenſible, or vicious wretch living.

That I may not interrupt that pleaſing flow of ideas, and that lovely proſpect of expectation, may they prove real and permanent, which now brighten your mind! Allow me to haſten a concluſion, and to wiſh that ſome remembrance of me may ever find ſome corner in my dear Emmy's delicate affection.

Your's, in all degrees of

ſincere cordiality,

MARIA HARTRY.

MARIA to ÆMILY.

Oak-hall.

YOU cannot imagine, my deareſt Æmily, how much your laſt letter* has ſurprized me; nor are you ſo explicit as I could wiſh: you only tell me, that an unexpected buſineſs requires your uncle's immediate attendance in Ireland, and that he has deſired you to poſtpone your marriage till after his return; thus leaving me to gueſs at all the other circumſtances: however, I hope that his buſineſs, (whatever it be) will not detain him long; and if ſo, I will fairly confeſs, that I am not ſorry for it, for two reaſons; firſt, becauſe to learn how to ſet a juſt value on proſperity, we ſhould feel the frowns of diſ-

* This letter does not appear.

appoint-

appointment; ſo this ſlight misfortune will inure you to the patient toleration of greater, ſhould they ever arrive: the other cauſe of my joy at this event is, that it will give me the pleaſure of your company, as I muſt inſiſt on having you at Oak-hall during your uncle's abſence: bring Mr. Martin with you, and let us make a *partié quarrée*; who the fourth perſon is to be, I will inform you when I can do it in perſon.—Oh! my Æmily, I have much to ſay to you, more than I can poſſibly croud into the limits of this letter: I will therefore make no other apology for leaving you in ſome doubt, than my eager deſire of ſeeing you with all convenient ſpeed. Come ſoon, I requeſt, and glad the heart of

Your's, moſt affectionately,

MARIA HARTRY.

CHAP. X.

IN conſequence of the foregoing Letter, Æmily ſoon ſet out for Oak-hall; though not without ſome ſmall regret, as Mr. Martin's attendance at Weſtminſter neceſſarily prevented him from accompanying her; but as Maria will now begin to make no ſmall figure in this hiſtory, it may be right to give my readers ſome further account of this young lady, as well as of her parents: in order to do which properly, I muſt begin at an earlier period than that to which I have reduced my ſtory.

Sir Thomas Hartry was a baronet poſſeſſed of a large eſtate in the country where he reſided; which he inherited from a long train of anceſtors, who were all rendered remarkable by their extreme

treme avarice: and though he did not poſſeſs this ſhocking contraction of heart in ſo great a degree, ſtill he did not totally degenerate from the maxim of his illuſtrious forefathers. "Get mo-"ney," was his favourite principle; and indeed this ſeemed to be the aim of all his actions; notwithſtanding which, he was by no means totally callous to the feelings of humanity; for, what was moſt extraordinary, he could feel for the diſtreſſes of others; though he ſeemed deaf to almoſt the common calls of neceſſity for himſelf. Ever conſtant to his favourite notions, he married lady Hartry for two reaſons; the one, becauſe ſhe had ten thouſand pounds; the other, in hopes of having an heir to his eſtate: and as this was almoſt his ultimate wiſh, one would imagine he muſt be completely happy, to find himſelf indulged with ſuch a

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bleſſing, about a year after his marriage; and ſuch a one, who as he grew up, became the admiration of the whole country, for his ſenſe and good nature: in ſhort, he ſeem'd entirely clear'd from his father's faults, and to inherit the virtues only of both his parents; yet, ſuch is the unaccountable caprice of human nature, that though he was ſo deſerving a ſon, as almoſt to exceed deſcription, he never was a favourite with his father; who, notwithſtanding, could aſſign no reaſon for his diſlike. Charles (that was his name), beheld it with concern, and endeavoured to gain his affections by his aſſiduity; but this, inſtead of being taken in the favourable light, ſerved only to heighten his father's diſguſt: in ſhort, nothing could pleaſe him, and he at laſt drove him, by a courſe of ill uſage, at the age of eighteen, to ſeek that happineſs among

among his neareſt relations. But behold the amazing caprice of mankind! who never know how to ſet a juſt value on a jewel till 'tis gone; that we cannot know how much we love, or what it is to want a friend, till we have loſt him, was never more ſtrongly verified than in this inſtance of Sir Thomas Hartry; who, till this moment, never was aware of the real affection which he had for his ſon; his virtues now appeared with double force to the afflicted father, who in vain uſed all poſſible means to recover him; and when he found that he was gone for ever, all the tender parent riſing into his eyes, quite abſorb'd the man; and he for ſome time gave way to that ſoft ſorrow, which overpowered his breaſt, and which he could not ſuppreſs.

So ſevere a blow had nearly been too much for Lady Hartry, who almoſt doated on her ſon, regarding him with thoſe innate feelings which mothers only can be truly judges of. Time, however, that great reſtorer of all things, in ſome meaſure alleviated the grief of both Sir Thomas and his lady; the former of whom, with the loſs of his ſon, ſeemed totally to have abandoned his paſſion for money, and determined to make up in kindneſs what the ſon had wanted, to his daughter Maria, who being about ten years old when the above affair happened, could not, of courſe, be ſuppoſed to feel much affliction for the loſs of her brother:—all that ſhe could, ſhe did.—As ſhe might now be reckoned an only child, no trouble, no expence, was ſpared in the education of this darling of the family: and her fond parents were overjoyed to find

their

their trouble and attention ſo well repaid, as to behold her, at the age of eighteen, poſſeſſed of every natural as well as acquired perfection, neceſſary to complete the accompliſhed lady: her perſon was handſome to exceſs, rather ſhort than otherwiſe; her carriage was eaſy and genteel without affectation;

"Her breath diſclos'd the ſweets of ſpring;
"And if for ſummer you would ſeek,
"'Twas painted in her eye, her cheek."

The goodneſs of her underſtanding has been made ſufficiently apparent to the reader by her letter, before inſerted, to Æmily, on the ſubject of her marriage. So happy in natural and acquired perfections, no wonder ſhe was the delight of her parents, and the admiration of all who knew her.

CHAP. XI.

——————— But come what ſorrow can,
It cannot countervail th' exchange of joy
That one ſhort minute gives me, in her ſight.

ROMEO and JULIET.

MARIA Hartry was propoſed as a juſt pattern for all the young ladies in the country. No young man could ſee her without loving; nor was there any father but what courted, and would have been proud of, her alliance. Yet, amidſt the many admirers that ſhe gained, the many compliments which were paid her, and though ſurrounded by the whole artillery of love; no gallant could yet boaſt of having received more encouragement from her than was becoming an acquaintance, for as ſuch only did ſhe regard all who had offered

ed her their ſervices: notwithſtanding which, as I profeſs myſelf to be a faithful hiſtorian, I muſt confeſs, that ſhe could not call her heart her own, it having long ſince, in her private determination, been beſtowed on a neighbouring gentleman, whoſe name was Melvill; though he was ignorant of his good fortune in the poſſeſſion of ſo ineſtimable a treaſure; not that he was blind to the united charms of perſon and underſtanding, which ſo apparently ſhone forth in Maria, but becauſe his diffidence prevented him from aſſuring himſelf of that ſucceſs, which only depended on his aſking her the queſtion.

I will not pay ſo bad a compliment to that young gentleman's underſtanding as to ſay, he was the handſomeſt man nature ever formed; let it ſuffice

to

to aſſure my readers, that ſhe had been far from deficient in adorning him with perſonal qualifications, to which his politeneſs gave an additional luſtre; his father dying whilſt he was yet young, left him heir to a very large eſtate; on this proviſo, that he ſhould not come into the poſſeſſion thereof, till he attained the age of twenty-five years: a right, which though not allowed of, either by nature or juſtice, many parents thus aſſume, by prolonging the minority of their children. As he lived with his guardian, in the neighbourhood of Sir Thomas Hartry, he of courſe was intimate with that gentleman, and from his frequent viſits at Oak-hall, had drank deep of the delicious poiſon of love, before he knew by what name to ſtile his regard; recollection of the pleaſure which he always found in Maria's company, too ſoon, alas! convinced

vinced him of the true reaſon, and he ſeveral times determined to inform her thereof; but ſuch is the modeſty attendant on unfeigned love, that, notwithſtanding the various opportunities he had, his fear overcame his regard, and prevented his beginning the only ſubject on which he wiſh'd to talk; but 'tis not the tongue alone, that can declare our paſſion; no, our eyes pronounce it, and every action ſpeaks; what though he never told her that he lov'd; his whole behaviour ſhew'd it; it was apparent to every eye; nor could Maria any longer be blind, to what ſhe ſo earneſtly wiſh'd to be true.

She ſaw it with pleaſure; and thus Melvill had a more powerful advocate in her breaſt, than he even dared to hope: thus ſituated, ſhe daily expected a declaration, and as often was diſappointed;

pointed; for tho' her behaviour gave him every encouragement the nature of their connection would admit of, he could not ſo far overcome the natural timid reſpect of his ſoul. Under theſe almoſt inſupportable torments, his health, from inward grief, ſenſibly declined; his life became burthenſome and tedious; he never was eaſy one minute when out of her preſence, and, at the ſame time, was racked with the moſt tormenting fears of loſing her for ever: In this unhappy ſtate did he for ſome time live, till no longer able to endure it, he determined to acquaint her with his inviolable attachment, and hope the beſt. When we have form'd any fav'rite ſcheme, it is an eaſy matter to find an opportunity of putting it into execution; thus as Melvill had formed a deſign, on the ſucceſs of which, all the happineſs of his future life depend-

ed,

ed, he burnt with the moſt eager impatience to be delivered from ſo painful an uncertainty; and as very few days paſſed in which he was not at Oak-hall, he ſoon found the ſo much wiſhed for opportunity.

One very warm day, after having dined there, Maria propoſed a walk in the grove, which her parents immediately aſſented to, ſaying that they would follow her; thus luckily leaving our young couple together, at which Maria was not a little pleaſed, Melvill having previouſly informed her, that when a proper time offered, he could wiſh to have ſome converſation with her: therefore joyfully leaving her parents to follow them, ſhe ſet out with Melvill, almoſt dying with curioſity to know what he had to communicate.

She wiſhed it might be what ſhe ſuſpected; though at the ſame time ſhe was not totally devoid of fear leſt it ſhould, not being provided with a ſuitable anſwer thereto: from theſe conſiderations therefore, her mind was far from being the moſt tranquil. Conſcious of his intentions, Melvill was not in a very enviable ſituation, and trembled ſo violently, that had ſhe not been as much agitated, it could never have eſcaped her notice: however, by both being equally concerned, they neither of them perceived it in the other, and thus walked without uttering a ſyllable, till they arrived at a bench in the grove, where they ſat down, both ſtill preſerving the exacteſt ſilence; many attempts, indeed, to ſpeak, were made on both ſides, but nothing more than—*Sir*—and *Madam*——*I beg your pardon*——*I thought you ſpoke*——and ſuch incoherent

rent ſentences paſſed, till, after ſome heſitation, Maria took courage enough to aſk, what buſineſs Mr. Melvill could have with her?—to which he returned no anſwer, and put her to the painful neceſſity of repeating the queſtion; when no longer able to reſtrain his paſſion, he dropt on one knee, and ſeizing her hand, cried, "Can you, lovely "Maria, even appear to be ignorant of "what I have to ſay? — Who can be "permitted to converſe with you, with-"out involuntarily loving you?—Can "you be miſtreſs of thoſe charms, and "wonder at my paſſion?——Yes, dear-"eſt angel, I love you with the moſt "ardent affection; but could I have "divin'd, that a declaration thereof "would have ſo far offended you, (as "by your countenance I ſee you now "are) my lips for ever ſhould have been "cloſed, and I would have carried the

"ſecret

" ſecret to my early grave. What va-
" nity could induce me to hope your
" kind notice, with ſo ſmall a ſhare of
" attraction and merit to recommend
" me?—But do not, dear Maria, do
" not hate me; though you cannot
" love, do not deſpiſe me."——" De-
" ſpiſe you!— no, Mr. Melvil, heaven
" forbid I ſhould deſpiſe any one!---
" But pray, Sir, riſe:— you diſtreſs
" me—indeed you do." —— " I did
" not mean it, (replied he:) I would
" ſooner die, than give you one mo-
" ment's uneaſineſs:— but will you
" then thus reject me for ever?—Oh!
" do not look with ſuch chilling indif-
" ference: allow me to hope, without
" treſpaſſing the bounds of delicacy,
" one favourable expreſſion." ——
" What would you have me ſay?"—
" Only that I am not quite indifferent
" to you, not hateful." —— " You are
" indeed,

"indeed, Sir, (replied ſhe, ſighing) far "from it." —— "And is it poſſible, "(returned Melvill) that Maria can "think tenderly of me?" —— "Soft, "no more:—here are my father and "mother." —— "But may I then be "permitted (ſays the impatient lover) "to impart my further ſentiments by "letter?" —— "Any thing, if you will "now be ſilent: another time I'll hear "you, or from you."

The arrival of Sir Thomas and Lady Hartry put an end to the converſation for this time. The diſcourſe turned on indifferent topics, and our young couple parted much better pleaſed with each other than when they met; Maria, to find that ſhe had not placed her affections on a ſenſeleſs and unworthy object; and Melvill, that he had gained a kind of permiſſion to write to her, which

which he determined to do immediately on his return home.

CHAP. XII.

To mourn a miſchief that is paſt and gone,
Is the next way to draw new miſchief on;
The robb'd that ſmiles, ſteals ſomething from the thief;
He robs himſelf, that ſpends a bootleſs grief.

OTHELLO.

BEFORE I proceed any farther, I muſt beg leave to introduce to my readers, ſome new acquaintances, I mean the family of Mr. Howard, Melvill's guardian; which indeed was not large, as it conſiſted only of himſelf, his daughter Charlotte, and his ward. This gentleman had formerly been in a capital buſineſs in London; during which

which time, he had contracted an intimacy with Melvill's father; who, from his candour and juſt dealing, conceived ſo good an opinion of him, as at his death to appoint him ſole guardian to his ſon.

On the loſs of his wife, he retired with his daughter, who was then an infant, to the ſmall eſtate where he now reſided, to enjoy the down-hill of his life, far from the noiſy buſtling of that world, the major part of which he was convinced, made fraud their only ſtudy, and money their almoſt ſole purſuit: although his rank in life was not equal to that of Sir Thomas Hartry, nevertheleſs a great intimacy ſubſiſted between the two families; and Charles Hartry and Charlotte being play-fellows when young, conceived for each other a cordial and unfeigned friendſhip,

ſhip, which as they grew up, ripening into mutual love, in their inadvertent youth they readily gave way to it; but when the pleaſing fondneſs in ſome meaſure was ſubſided into a ſettled paſſion, and reaſon had recovered her loſt ſway, Charles began ſeriouſly to conſider, that on account of their inequality of fortunes, it would be impoſſible ever to make his father agree to the match; and, as he had too much real love for poor Charlotte to think of involving her in certain diſtreſs, by a clandeſtine marriage, he had no other reſource left, than the afore-mentioned manner of leaving Oak-hall; flattering himſelf, that abſence would efface the remembrance of what he dared not cheriſh in his breaſt; nor would he venture to take leave of this darling of his heart, leſt her preſence and arguments ſhould ſhake the firm reſolve which he had made.

made. After his departure, and not till then, would he inform her of his reaſons for this ſtep, which he did by letter; and although ſhe ſaw the juſtneſs and propriety thereof, in their full force, his abſence could not fail of being a heavy cauſe of grief to her; however, as reſignation was the only medicine which could reſtore her peace, ſhe patiently ſubmitted to her misfortunes; though being deſtitute of a friend, to whom ſhe might relate the ſtory of her woe, ſhe could not forbear ſometimes in private, paying to his memory the tribute of a tear; till as Maria grew up, they form'd an intimacy, which, from a ſimilarity of ſentiments, was ſoon converted into friendſhip; and Charlotte had the ſatisfaction of unburthening her heart of the load under which it laboured, to that perſon

from

from whom ſhe was ſure to meet the generous return of compaſſion: nor was her confidence miſplaced; Maria ſaw, and pitied her misfortunes; and by being frequently with her, kindly endeavoured to diſpel that gloom which hung upon her countenance, whilſt alone. Melvill therefore knowing the friendly connection which ſubſiſted between them, determined, thro' Charlotte's means, to get a letter conveyed to Maria; and accordingly, on his return to Mr. Howard's, informed her of what, from his behaviour, ſhe muſt have been blind not to have perceived before; at the ſame time deſiring her aſſiſtance therein, knowing what it was to love, and pitying the pangs of barr'd affections, ſhe promiſed him all the help in her power; and as an earneſt of future ſervices, to convey

convey a letter the next morning to Oak-hall, upon which he immediately wrote as follows:

To Miſs HARTRY.

Dear Madam,

In what words ſhall I expreſs my ſorrow, for the pain that my yeſterday's behaviour gave you? If I then ſaid any thing to incur your diſpleaſure, or really offend you, I hope you will have goodneſs enough to attribute it to the violence of a paſſion, which no time can alter or abate: and conſider, that I declared it to you, before I could have an opportunity to weigh the conſequences of ſuch behaviour, that my mind was ſo replete with the idea of your perfections, I was not maſter of myſelf; that the time, the place, the opportunity, all conſpired to hurry me

on to that act, by which I have incurred your diſpleaſure. If you will generouſly recollect all theſe, I flatter myſelf your goodneſs of heart is ſuch, that you will readily forgive me: for be aſſured, that could I have foreſeen any diſpleaſure, or painful anxiety, on your ſide, nothing ſhould have forced the painful ſecret from me. However, ſince I have once had the preſumption to entertain a thought of you, give me leave again to throw myſelf at your feet, and declare, what I hope you will believe me ſincere in, that I love you almoſt to diſtraction.—Oh! deareſt Maria, if you cannot regard me with a favourable eye, at leaſt pity the ſufferings of

Your devoted admirer,

HENRY MELVILL.

The

The above letter Charlotte diſpatched under a cover to her friend, and Melvill waited the return of the meſſenger with the greateſt anxiety; however, thinking him unuſually tedious, (for lovers ever run before the clock) in order to amuſe himſelf, he took up his favourite author*, when the following lines immediately caught his eye, which he thought ſo applicable to himſelf, that he could not forbear repeating them two or three times aloud:

Bleſt be the man, his memory at leaſt,
Who found the art thus to unfold his breaſt;
And taught ſucceeding times an eaſy way,
Their ſecret thoughts by letters to convey;
To baffle abſence, and ſecure delight,
Which, till that time, was limited to ſight:
The parting farewel ſpoke the laſt adieu;
The leſs'ning diſtance paſt, then loſs of view;

* The GUARDIAN.

The friend was gone, which ſome kind moments gave,
And abſence ſeparated, like the grave.
When for a wife the youthful patriarch ſent,
The camels, jewels, and the ſteward, went;
The wealthy equipage, tho' grave and ſlow;
But not a line, which might the lover ſhew.
The rings and bracelets woo'd her hands and arms;
But, had ſhe known of melting words, the charms
That under ſecret ſeals in ambuſh lie,
To catch the ſoul when drawn into the eye;
The fair Aſſyrian had not took his guide,
Nor her ſoft heart in chains of pearl been ty'd.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

——————— If I were now to die,
'Twere now to be moſt happy; for I fear,
My ſoul hath her content ſo abſolute,
That not another comfort, like to this,
Succeeds in unknown fate.

OTHELLO.

MELVILL was amuſing himſelf after the manner mentioned at the concluſion of my laſt chapter, when Charlotte entered the room with a letter, which having given him, ſhe, ſmiling, retired: but the joy that he had conceived, at the receipt of an epiſtle from Maria, was quickly converted into the moſt poignant grief, when, on opening it, he read only the following words:

"Sir,

"Since I laſt ſaw you, an affair has "happened, of which I cannot conve-"niently inform you by letter. If you "have the regard which you profeſs "for me, you will find ſome immediate "opportunity of ſeeing

"The afflicted

"MARIA HARTRY."

On reading this extraordinary note, our hero was little better than one mad: his mind was agitated with the moſt perplexing doubts and fears; and in this agony did he ſet out for Oak-hall, without giving any anſwer to the repeated queſtions of Miſs Howard, who had no ſmall reaſon to be ſurprized at his behaviour; nor indeed could ſhe form any conjecture of the cauſe, 'till, juſt

juſt as he was ſetting out, throwing her Maria's note, he cried, "Madam, read "that;—then wonder, if you can, that "I am diſtracted."

On his arrival at Sir Thomas Hartry's, he found that both he and my lady were out, but that Maria was walked into the grove; thither he haſtened with all the impetuoſity of a lover, and found her on the ſame bench, where, but the preceding day he had diſcloſed his love; he foundher, 'tis true;—but, oh heart-piercing ſight! with one hand ſhe was ſupporting her head, and with the other, ſhe wiped away the tears, which fell in torrents from her lovely eyes.—She was ſo loſt in thought, that he got pretty near before ſhe perceived him; but when the ruſtling of the leaves drew her attention that way, ſtarting up, with eager tranſports, ſhe

cry'd, "Oh! Mr. Melvill, is it you?—
"I am glad you are come."—Then
ſmiling through her tears, ſhe added
"Have I not overſtepp'd the bounds
"of modeſty, in thus deſiring to ſee
"you?"—"Tell me, my dear Maria,
"(ſaid he) tell me, what is it that affects
"you, inform me, I beſeech you; what
"can be the cauſe of that uneaſineſs
"which I ſee ſo ſtrongly printed on
"your countenance?"—"You were
"no ſooner (anſwered ſhe) departed
"yeſterday, than my father inform'd
"me, that he was juſt come from Sir
"Toby Clunch, who had been to make
"a propoſal for an alliance of the two
"families, by his ſon's marriage with
"me; and, to my ſorrow, he was ſo
"thoroughly reſolved upon it, that it
"was in vain I pleaded my diſlike to
"Mr. Clunch; he who has hitherto
"been ſo indulgent a parent, nor ever

"offered

"offered to force my inclinations in an "affair of this nature, has inſiſted on "my receiving this gentleman as one "who is to be my huſband; and I am "ordered this afternoon to prepare for "an interview."—— "And can you! "can my Maria (ſaid Melvill) thus "cruelly reſolve to abandon me for "ever, juſt when I have had reſolution "to declare my love?"— "You know "(ſaid ſhe) it is my father's order; and "you muſt likewiſe know what will be "the inevitable conſequence of diſ-"obedience from a man of his violent "temper."—"And was this your buſi-"neſs with me, Madam?—but I will "not complain; for ſince I am indiffe-"rent to Miſs Hartry, it matters not "what becomes of me:—that you may "for ever be happy," was all that he could anſwer; and was juſt going to quit the place, when Maria recalled

him, by ſaying, with a tone of voice, that aſtoniſhed him, "although Mr. "Melvill may hereafter deſpiſe me, "for my ingenuity, in ſo readily ac- "knowledging my paſſion; neverthe- "leſs I can on no conſideration, be hy- "pocrite enough to diſguiſe the real "feelings of my heart; what that "dictates, my mouth muſt utter, nor "can I to gain the world, be guilty of "the leaſt deceit; no, Sir, be aſſured "that I will never give my hand to any "one but you, even at the altar, ſhould "they drag me there;—I will there "aſſert my right of nature as a free- "born Chriſtian, nor give my hand to "any one, when my heart is already "diſpos'd of to another."—On hearing this, Melvill ſtood like one thunder- ſtruck or petrified; at laſt taking her hand, with a look of inexpreſſible tender- neſs, he ſaid, "Deſpiſe you!—no my dear "Maria;

"Maria; I honour, I revere you for "your ingenuous generoſity of ſenti- "ment:—amiable girl!—that could at "once throw aſide the veil of diſſimu- "lation, her ſex ſo often affect, and thus "openly confeſs her regard;—oh, my "dear angel you are too good, I can "never deſerve it."—"Indeed you do "(interrupted ſhe) and much more; "but at preſent let us conſider of the "moſt probable means to extricate "ourſelves from this dilemma; which "the precipitate unkindneſs of a poſi- "tive parent, has thrown us into."—

After ſome converſation on the ſub- ject, it was agreed, that ſhe ſhould in- form Mr. Clunch of her diſlike to him; and if that would not do, even of her prepoſſeſſion in favour of another; to perſuade him to diſcontinue his viſits; and, having exchanged vows of mutual

fidelity, they parted; ſhe, to prepare for the reception of a man whom ſhe deteſted, and he to relate all that had paſſed to Charlotte, which he did immediately on his return home: but before I proceed, it may not be improper to give my readers ſome ſketch of Mr. Clunch's family and character.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

——————I am much ſorry, Sir,
You put me to forget a lady's manners
By being ſo verbal: and learn now for all
That I who know my heart, do here pronounce
By the very truth of it, I care not for you:
And am ſo near the lack of charity
T'accuſe myſelf, I hate you: which I had rather
You felt, than make my boaſt.

CYMBELINE.

MR. Clunch was the ſole heir of Sir Toby Clunch, who having loſt his wife in childbed of this ſon, grew ſo immoderately fond of him as never to ſuffer him out of his ſight; ſo that we may reaſonably ſuppoſe the education that he gave him was not the moſt refined; indeed his only concern was, to make him maſter of hunting, ſhooting,

ſhooting, and other ſuch ruſtic qualifications; in which he ſucceeded ſo happily, as to have him reckoned at the age of twenty-five, (the time of this propoſal) the completeſt ſportſman in the county; that is, he would fight a main of cocks, drive a ſet of horſes, ride a fox chace, drink his bottle, or ſhoot flying, with any man in the three kingdoms for five hundred guineas, play or pay; and in theſe five things conſiſted all his excellence; ſweet recommendations! to a girl of Maria's delicate feelings: his father had likewiſe not forgot to inſtil ſome of his favourite principles into him; ſuch as, "Chil-"dren have not, or ought not to have, "any will of their own;—— that all "their actions tend to one great end,— "obedience," and many others equally arbitrary and ridiculous.—When Sir Toby therefore mentioned this match

to

to him, all the anſwer he made to it was, —" Why, ay, I'll marry her, if " you think it proper; otherwiſe, I am " very well as I am,—howſomever I'm " glad you've appointed this afternoon " for the meeting, becauſe I am engag'd " to hunt to-morrow with neighbour " Trottall."——

Such was the gentleman who arriv'd at Oak-hall to pay his addreſſes to the lovelieſt of her ſex; and to whoſe beauty her anxiety and concern gave an additional luſtre: After a little general converſation, the young couple were left alone, and ſome time elaps'd before one word was ſpoke on either ſide, Mr. Clunch being very buſy in tying ſome knots in the laſh of his whip; however, recollecting himſelf, he approach'd nearer to Maria, and made the following elegant ſpeech.

" I ſup-

" I ſuppoſe, Miſs, you know my bu-
" ſineſs here; my father has ordered
" me to wait on you; for, as he ſays,
" we are to be married, he thinks it
" proper, we ſhould be a little ac-
" quainted beforehand; though, for
" my own part, I don't ſee the neceſſity
" for it; but it ſeems it is the way of
" your great folk; and ſince I am here,
" I'll tell you a piece of my mind,—
" look ye, Miſs, I am a man of few
" words,—I don't love your high-flown
" ſpeeches, becauſe I don't underſtand
" them; if you can like me for a huſ-
" band, — I'm your man: — but what
" do I ſay —if?— for your father ſays
" you muſt, and that's enough.'——
A great deal more of the ſame ſort did Maria ſuffer him to run on, before ſhe interrupted him; which ſhe at length did, though in the gentleſt terms poſſible, leſt be ſhould fly into a paſſion,

and

and thereby rouſe her father, whom ſhe knew to be not far off; with the moſt perſuaſive eloquence "ſhe begg'd him "not to importune her any longer on "the ſubject, for that ſhe could never "think of him for an huſband, that ſhe "ſhould always be proud to reſpect "him as an acquaintance; but found "herſelf unequal to the taſk of loving "him with the tenderneſs of a wife."

Rough as the ſurrounding woods, all the anſwer this unfeeling brute returned to her remonſtrances, was, "Why, for the matter of that, I can't "help it:—I believe there will be but "little love loſt between us; nor ſhould "I ever have troubled my head about "loving you, but that my father has "expreſly ſaid, I ſhall marry you; and "yours ſays the ſame."——"I am ſure "he could not ſo far forget himſelf,"

"(re-

" (replied Maria.) —— " Nay, but he " did, (anſwered the 'ſquire) and marry " me you muſt; unleſs you have a mind " to be a diſobedient girl:—but as I " am obliged to be out early to-mor- " row, I will take my leave of you; " ſo, Miſs, I wiſh you a good night:— " I ſhall acquaint Sir Thomas with your " behaviour, I aſſure you:—your ſer- " vant—your ſervant."—So ſaying, he ſallied out in queſt of her father, to whom he related all that had paſſed, not without ſome favourable additions on his own ſide.

When Maria found herſelf alone, burſting into tears, with uplifted hands, ſhe exclaimed, "—And is it poſſible, my " father can ſeriouſly think of marry- " ing me to ſuch a wretch?—a brute, " devoid of every ſenſe of feeling!— " *Your father ſays you* SHALL *marry me,*

" thoſe

" thoſe were his words:—Sure no ſuch
" unjuſt reſolve ever could eſcape his
" lips.---Would he, who hitherto has
" let my inclinations be as free as air,
" for the ſake of a little pelf, tie me
" to a wretch whom my ſoul deteſts,
" on whom I can never look but with
" abhorrence?—SHALL *marry me!*—
" Oh! that parents would enforce their
" commands in gentler, more rational
" terms!—Surely, if the ſin of diſobe-
" dience admits of palliation, it is where
" parents cruelly uſurp an authority,
" by endeavouring to force the hearts
" of their children; and which no ſitu-
" ation in life, however elevated or de-
" baſed, can give them a juſt right to,
" —Oh! Melvill, you have my heart,
" and on you alone will I beſtow my
" hand."

Thus

Thus was the lovely Maria bewailing her misfortunes, when the door opened, and preſented her father, with a much more angry look than ſhe had ever ſeen him wear before:——"Little "did I think, Maria, (ſaid he, on en-"tering) that I ſhould ever have ſo "much occaſion to be diſſatisfied with "you, what is the reaſon that you do "not behave even with common civility "to the man whom I have fixed upon "for your huſband?"—"I did indeed "Sir (ſaid ſhe) behave reſpectfully to "him; Oh Sir!—on my knees, let me "intreat you, by all the tender ties of "nature, to remember, that equality "and ſympathy of feelings in marriage, "is the only probable method to enſure "felicity;—do not make your only child "unhappy, by dooming her to receive "the churliſh addreſſes of that odious "man.—Man, do I call him?—he is not

"worthy

" worthy the name; a brute, that,"—
" This to my face (interrupted Sir
" Thomas) take care, take care what
" youſay;—I have always been a kind,
" indulgent father to you, can forgive
" any thing but obſtinate diſobedience.
" Make you unhappy!—why, have not
" I provided an huſband for you? a rich
" man!—don't I do all in my power to
" make you happy?—and now, forſooth,
" you ſay, you don't like him; what I
" ſuppoſe you want a fine frenchified
" beau, full of flattery and faſhion, a
" thing made by taylors and barbers;
" go, go you're a ſilly girl, and don't
" know what you like; beſides, what
" right have you to like?—it is I muſt
" like.—Look ye, Maria, if you don't
" alter your behaviour to Mr. Clunch,
" I'll, I'll,—but I'm in a paſſion, and
" won't make any reſolution; however,
" don't provoke me, beware the conſe-
" quences,

" quences, that is all,—beware the con-
" ſequences."——So ſaying he flung her from him, with all the heat of paſſion, on the ground, where ſhe lay hardly ſenſible, and preſented a ſpectacle ſufficient to have touch'd the moſt obdurate heart: Sir Thomas was leaving her in this condition, when lady Hartry entred the room, brought thither by the elevation of her huſband's voice; as ſoon as Maria ſaw her mother, immediately riſing up, ſhe deſired her to intercede for her with Sir Thomas, whom ſhe ſaid, ſhe had very unwillingly diſobliged, by expreſſing her reluctance at receiving the viſits of Mr. Clunch, as of one who was to be her huſband, and earneſtly begg'd her to diſſuade him from the odious match on which he had had ſet his heart.——As nothing out of the common courſe of nature can be of any long continuance; ſo Sir Thomas's

paſſion

paſſion ſoon began to ſubſide, and give way to the powerful conductreſs of all our actions, *Reaſon*; nor was he long able to withſtand the well timed arguments of a ſenſible wife, joined to the more powerful ſolicitations of an amiable daughter, but kiſſing Maria, told her he had been too haſty, and ſaw his error, bid her be a good girl, and endeavour to like Mr. Clunch; and concluded with an aſſurance of doing every thing in his power to make her happy.—Thus this quarrel ended, and in an hour not only ſeemed but really was forgot, by all the parties, except the heroine of the piece, whoſe reſt that night was not a little diſturbed, by the concern ſhe felt for her father's obſtinacy, in thus perſiſting in a match, which ſhe never could or would agree to.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

What torments exceeding, what joys are above,
The pains and the pleaſures, that wait upon love?

AS none of the family at Oak-hall were acquainted with Melvill's paſſion, he continued his viſits there as uſual, and in a few days had the happineſs of being an hour with his Maria, who informed him of all the particulars of the ſcene related in the laſt chapter; But, as the converſation of lovers is chiefly made up of repetitions, unintereſting to all but the parties concerned, and as I am a perſon of too nice honour to diſcover the ſecrets of others; I ſhall trouble my readers with no more of this than to ſay, the reſult of their conference was, that Maria ſhould diſcover

cover the hiſtory of their paſſion to her mother, and beg her kind aſſiſtance, in endeavouring to perſuade Sir Thomas to agree to their marriage; accordingly ſhe ſoon found an opportunity of relating the affair to lady Hartry, which ſhe did with the moſt candid ingenuity, without concealing a ſingle circumſtance; at the ſame time intreating her, as ſhe valued her happineſs and peace of mind, to perſuade Sir Thomas not to attempt to force her inclinations, and lay her under the ſevere taſk of diſobedience to a parent's commands. This good woman was ſo well pleaſed at her daughter's ſincerity, that ſhe wanted but little perſuaſion to do what ſhe was deſired, and promiſed, that the firſt opportunity ſhe had, ſhe would uſe all the rhetoric ſhe was miſtreſs of, to perſuade her huſband to relinquiſh all thoughts of Mr. Clunch.

The next time they were alone, he luckily open'd the ſubject, by ſaying, "I can't imagine what reaſon that girl "can have, for ſo ſtrongly objecting to "marrying the perſon whom my pru-"dence has ſelected, as one fit to be "her huſband; a young man of perſon, "family and fortune, who demands no "money till after my death too; a "plaguing, provoking little jade; when "I have found a ſuitable match for her, "in all reſpects, ſhe forſooth, muſt ob-"ject to it, by ſaying, *She cannot love* "*him*, but ſhe ſhall have him I'm deter-"min'd, or I'll never give her a far-"thing." — As lady Hartry had pre-reſolv'd not to mention a word of Mel-vill, leſt he ſhould imagine, (as he ſometimes would) that ſhe was joined in a plot againſt him; ſhe only inter-rupted him, by gently ſaying, "Nay, "now my dear, you are indeed too violent;

"violent; conſider, that we can never "account for natural antipathies of our "own, to particular people, much leſs "for thoſe of others; ſhe is young and "may hereafter know better: but let "me intreat you, as ſhe is ſo ſtrongly "reſolved againſt the match, to think "no more of it. Don't, Sir Thomas, "make your girl unhappy."—But all this ſignified nothing; he had formed a reſolution, and it was not in the power of words to make him alter it; he was reſolutely determined not to give up the point, therefore ending where he began, "that if ſhe would not marry "Clunch, he would diſinherit her," he left the room.

Maria had been waiting to be informed of her doom from her mother, and though when ſhe ſaw Sir Thomas, ſhe thought ſhe could too plainly read

it in his countenance; ſtill as uncertainty, (even in miſery) is painful, ſhe was willing to be convinced of her wretchedneſs; and accordingly haſtened to lady Hartry, whom ſhe found in tears, and who, after having endeavoured in ſome meaſure to comfort her, inform'd her circumſtantially of all that had paſſed; ſhe, for ſome time, heard her with great ſeeming patience, and finding ſhe had done ſpeaking, claſping her hand, immediately exclaimed with great energy,—"and does he ſtill thus "cruelly perſiſt in his reſolve? then "am I doom'd for ever to be miſerable, "as no power on earth ſhall ever force "me to agree to it."—Lady Hartry endeavoured all in her power to argue Maria into temperature; and, as eloquence is to reaſon down the fever of the blood, and ſooth with words the tumult of the ſoul, ſo it never was better

applied

applied than at preſent; for ſhe in a ſhort time coolly liſten'd to her mother's advice, which was, to inform Melvill of what had paſſed, and give him leave to make open propoſals to her father, "who, (added ſhe) when he finds your "affections fixed on another object, may "perhaps give his conſent to that, "which it will not be in his power to "prevent." —— Maria accordingly, the next morning, wrote a letter to Melvill, informing him of what the reader has before heard, and concluded it in theſe words, "Since my father has "thought proper to throw off the in-"dulgence which ought to accompany "that name, you have my free conſent, "to make whatever propoſals to him "your love dictates."—His regard for her, muſt indeed have been very trifling, not to have underſtood her meaning,

which he did in its full force, and accordingly waited on Sir Thomas that very day; and, after the firſt civilities were over, opened to him the occaſion of his viſit; who, as it was quite unexpected, did not attempt to interrupt him in his diſcourſe; but when he had finiſhed, made the following reply.——

"I ſhall always eſteem Mr. Melvill,
"as a friend and as a neighbour; but
"can never think of him for a ſon-in-
"law:—I have paſſed my word to an-
"other gentleman; had I not, I could
"never liſten to your propoſals.—Con-
"ſider, Sir, that by your late father's
"will, you are not of age, nor will be
"theſe three years; you can therefore
"make no ſettlement on Maria, except
"her own fortune, which a beggar can
"equally do; and would you have me
"give my only daughter to a beggar?
"for ſuch in fact it would be: and as

"for

" for truſting to your love for her three
" years hence, it is nothing at all, poſ-
" ſeſſion ſoon cloys; for what man riſes
" from a feaſt with that keen appetite
" with which he firſt ſat down?"——
" I am ſorry, very ſorry, Sir, (ſaid
" Melvill) to find you have ſo bad an
" opinion of me; but even allowing
" my love for your daughter ſhould
" abate, I ſay, Sir, allowing your cruel,
" unjuſt ſuſpicion to prove true, love
" for myſelf would engage me to fulfill
" my promiſes,—my honour, Sir."—
" Honour (cried Sir Thomas) is not
" what it was; I remember when, as it
" ought, it was as ſacred as a man's
" bond, and I ſhould have thought
" myſelf as ſecure from the one as the
" other; but that time is paſt, and I
" very much fear, never to be recal-
" led.—Honour is the offspring of fair
" truth and honeſty, yet to what baſe,

" what ſcandalous uſes, do we not ſee
" it perverted?—Does a man want to
" ſeduce an innocent girl, honour's his
" cry, his honour will oblige him to mar-
" ry her;—and thus, while he profeſſes
" a moſt noble, glorious virtue, does he
" not commit the moſt abandoned acts
" of wickedneſs!—It is now ſo ſhame-
" fully corrupted, that it ſerves but for
" a gilded bait to catch unwary fools;
" I am ſorry to ſay it, but who truſts
" to the bare proſpect of a man's ho-
" nour, truſts too often to a broken
" ſtaff: but far be it from me to ar-
" raign your's. —No Sir, I believe you
" may have a ſtrict ſenſe of it, I hope
" you have; if ſo, I am glad of it; but
" ſtill I cannot think of you for my
" daughter, don't let me hear any
" more of it; I beg you'll not rob me
" of an agreeable acquaintance, by
" laying me under the neceſſity of
" forbidding

" forbidding you my houſe."——Melvill found the truth of all he ſaid ſo ſtrong, that he could make no anſwer to it; and Sir Thomas was leaving the room, when he caught him by the hand, crying, in the moſt ſupplicating tone, " Do not, dear Sir, make your amiable " daughter unhappy by a refuſal." — " Unhappy! (re-echoed Sir Thomas) " why you have not, ſure?—— You " cannot ſo far have prevail'd upon her, " that ſhe has agreed to this propoſal; " but I'll hear it from her own mouth." — So ſaying, he ſallied out in queſt of the unfortunate Maria, who luckily was not to be found, and he returned rather cooler than he went, to tell Melvill, that after what had paſſed, he muſt deſire him to diſcontinue his viſits.—This was a painful ſentence to our almoſt diſtracted lover; who, however, bore his misfortune with firmneſs, and departed

from Oak-hall, without gaining one ſight of his amiable afflicted.

CHAP. XVI.

I'm giddy, expectation whirls me round,
Th' imaginary reliſh is ſo ſweet,
That it inchants my ſenſe; what will it be
When that the wat'ry palate taſtes indeed
Love's thrice reputed nectar?

TROILUS and CRESSIDA.

SIR Thomas began now ſeriouſly to conſider, that gentle means would be the moſt probable, to make his daughter conquer her diſlike to one lover, and obliterate her regard for the other; in the evening, therefore, he gently tax'd her with her paſſion for Melvill, and as ſhe had heard of his viſit,

viſit, of which too well gueſſing the cauſe, ſhe knew it would be to no purpoſe to deny it; and therefore acknowledg'd his ſuſpicions to be juſt; at the ſame time, begging his pardon, and promiſing, never to make him unhappy by a clandeſtine marriage: — in anſwer to which, he inform'd her; that, if ſhe ſhould ever be guilty of ſuch an imprudent ſtep, from that day ſhe muſt forfeit all pretenſions to his favour; which to enſure, he ſtill inſiſted on her receiving Clunch's viſits, whom he inform'd her, was the next day to be at Oak-hall: — ſhe begg'd, ſhe intreated, ſhe would promiſe any thing, provided he would give up that point.—But her prayers and tears, alas, were all too ineffectual; his whole heart was ſet upon it; nor could any argument, however ſtrong and forcible, change the ſettled purpoſe of his ſoul.

Her time, therefore, now paſſed wretchedly, being bound to the irkſome company of a man, whom ſhe deteſted; or in hearing the terrifying threats of her father: ſometimes indeed, ſhe gain'd a ſhort reſpite, by being left alone with her mother, who pitied her ſituation, and tenderly endeavoured to alleviate the torments of her breaſt, with all the ſoft feelings of an indulgent parent; and whenever Sir Thomas was from home, as ſhe knew that all her felicity was center'd in Melvill's company, ſent for him to Oak-hall, who, with joy, obey'd the glad ſummons, ſo that his moments would have paſſed far from diſagreeable, had it not been for the melancholy reflection of what his dear Maria muſt ſuffer at other times; but as he ſaw there was no likelihood of his ever gaining her father's conſent to their union, after ſome ſtruggles of reflection,

reflection, he ventur'd to mention a ſecret marriage to her; but ſhe would not liſten to it, and ſilenc'd him by ſaying, — that tho' her father had thus thrown off the kindneſs of a parent, ſtill ſhe would ſupport the duty of an obedient daughter, as ſhe did not think any unkindneſs of his ſide, could authorize ſuch an act of indiſcretion in her: ——Happy would it be, were every young lady of this way of thinking; how many miſerable hours would it then ſave themſelves, and others.——

Various and many were the ſchemes which Melvill thought of, whereby to gain Sir Thomas's conſent; but ſtill they could afford him but the momentary pleaſure of imagination, as he for ſome time could hit on none likely to effect it: however, after long patience and perſeverance, his invention fram'd one,

one, which appear'd to him ſo likely to ſucceed, that he determin'd to mention it the next time he went to Oak-hall. The wiſh'd-for moment ſoon arriv'd, and the above thought gave him ſo unuſual a flow of ſpirits, that Maria could not avoid aſking him the reaſon: taking her hand with inexpreſſible tenderneſs, he reply'd, —— "I "have, my deareſt life, at laſt, thought "of ſomething which may make us "both happy; but as ſome deceit is "neceſſary on your ſide, I did not "chooſe to mention it, being well con-"vinc'd, that your ſenſe of truth is ſo "ſtrict, you would ſcruple a falſhood, "even in thought."—Having thank'd him in a genteel manner for his compliment, ſhe deſir'd to know what it was, ſaying, —— that if ſhe thought there was any probability of its ſucceſs, ſhe would venture a great deal, to be

freed

freed from the miſery in which ſhe then liv'd; but (added ſhe) here comes my mother, let her hear it; and if ſhe approves thereof, that alone will be reaſon ſufficient for me to put it into execution.

Lady Hartry having join'd the company, Melvill told them the ſcheme from which he entertain'd ſuch flattering hopes, in the following words;—"It is, (ſaid he) that Maria ſhall feign "an implicit obedience to her father's "commands, in receiving the addreſſes "of Mr. Clunch; that ſhe ſhall even "carry her ſeeming duty ſo far, as to "go to church with him, and then "publickly refuſe him at the altar: "this, of courſe will convince Sir Tho-"mas of her firm reſolve, never to "marry the man whom he has fix'd "upon; which will alſo be ſo public an

"affront

" affront to my rival, as to ſhake off his
" diſagreeable ſolicitations: I will take
" care to be preſent, and make uſe of
" all my rhetoric, to perſuade him to
" conſent to our union; if he is cruel
" enough to entertain a doubt of my
" making a ſettlement on Maria, when
" I come of age, I will even agree to
" have our marriage poſtpon'd to that
" period, and at the ſame time, to put
" a private one out of our power, will
" conſent to reſide abroad, during all
" the intervening time; and notwith-
" ſtanding his late behaviour, I am ſo
" well convinc'd of his natural good-
" neſs of heart, that, added thereto
" my perſuaſion, the ſolemnity of the
" place, and his ſurpriſe at ſo ſudden
" and unexpected an affair, will, alto-
" gether, be too much for him to reſiſt;
" and then, my deareſt girl, we ſhall
" with pleaſure look back on all theſe

" obſtacles

" obſtacles as ſtronger incitements to
" us, to love each other hereafter, with
" increaſing ardour; for as the poet ſays;

" Love in ſecurity but faintly burns,
" But after doubts and fears, more bright returns."

Altho' this was certainly the moſt unaccountable thought that ever enter'd into a madman's head; ſtill, as a lover, we muſt not wonder at his adopting it; and Maria coming under the ſame predicament, we muſt not be ſurpriz'd, at his finding ſo little difficulty in perſuading her to agree to any thing which carried with it the leaſt probability of inſuring her happineſs; tho' ſhe often repeated, that the hypocriſy would be very painful: but what ſhall we ſay to lady Hartry? in whom, to uſe Hamlet's words, " The heigh-day
" in her blood was tame, was humble,
" and waited on the judgment;" yet

ſuch

ſuch is the frailty of human nature, that tho' ſhe made the moſt ſcruples, Melvill's perſuaſions, join'd to her wiſhes for Maria's happineſs, ſoon overcame her ſcruples of deceit; and it was therefore agreed, that this ſcheme ſhould be immediately carried into execution; and as Maria was the principal actreſs, we may be ſure ſhe determined to haſten it as much as poſſible.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

And yet methinks duty cannot demand the ſacrifice of my own happineſs! ſurely neither heaven or nature require me, in obedience to a parent, to marry a man with whom I muſt be for ever miſerable.

The OPERA of TOM JONES.

OUR lovers, thus happy in the anticipation of future joys, had been ſome time alone; when they were ſuddenly ſurpriz'd by the unexpected return of Sir Thomas, who immediately burſt into the room where they were ſitting; happy was it for lady Hartry that ſhe had left them, being thereby render'd unſuſpected of having had any hand in the meeting; although the bare finding the young couple together, would have been ſufficient grounds for

Sir

Sir Thomas to have reprimanded Melvill; yet to add to the misfortune, he had interrupted them in a minute, ſacred alone to love and privacy; in ſhort, he had found his daughter claſp'd in the arms of him ſhe fondly lov'd: to deſcribe the ſurprize painted on each of their countenances at this minute, would require the pen of a Fielding, or the pencil of a Hogarth; there was but one part for Maria to take; and therefore, with an aſſum'd anger, puſhing Melvill from her, ſhe utter'd ſome few inarticulate words in a kind of reproof.

——Sir Thomas now began, by telling him, that after what had paſs'd, he was much ſurpriz'd at ſeeing him there, and inſiſted he would not for the future trouble Oak-hall with his company, for if he did, as a gentleman, he ſhould be obliged to call him to an account for his behaviour. Melvill, willing to improve

prove on the hint he had receiv'd from Maria, begg'd his pardon in the moſt humble manner; adding, that he need no longer be under any apprehenſions concerning his viſits at Oak-hall, as he had been ſufficiently tutor'd on that ſubject by his daughter, whoſe anger he had already incurred, by his unpardonable preſumption; ſo ſaying, he took his leave, inwardly pleas'd at having left Maria ſo fair an opening towards the proſecution of their ſcheme; nor was ſhe at all behind-hand with him in contrivance: for when her father began to reprimand her for ſeeing Melvill, contrary to his expreſs commands, ſhe interrupted him by ſaying, that, according to his orders, ſhe had endeavour'd all in her power to forget him, in which ſhe was ſo happy as to have ſucceeded, but that, if ſhe had any little eſteem for him left, he had now

forfeited it, by this laſt act of imprudence; as a proof of which, ſhe was willing to receive favourably Mr. Clunch's viſits, and ready to enter into an alliance with that family, as ſoon as was agreeable to her father.

Sir Thomas kiſs'd her, call'd her his good, his dutiful child; and, in his fondneſs, was as ridiculouſly fooliſh as in his anger: he had formerly been imprudently paſſionate; and tho' Maria, out of a pretended coyneſs, objected to ſo early a time, he inſiſted on that day ſev'nnight being fixed for the wedding, and that all neceſſary preparations ſhould be immediately begun; to which our heroine, with great ſeeming reluctance, at length conſented, promiſing to obey her father in every thing, who inſtantly ran to communicate this good news to his wife.

It was on the evening of this happy day, before Sir Thomas had ſcarce recover'd from the tranſports which the firſt knowledge of his daughter's obedience had thrown him into, when the happineſs of this family was not a little increas'd, by the arrival of Æmily Summers, tho' the felicity of moſt of them ſprung from different cauſes:—as this young lady was no ſtranger at Oak-hall, her preſence did not in the leaſt reſtrain the lively ſallies of the Baronet's joy; nor had ſhe been long arriv'd, before ſhe was given to underſtand the reaſon.—Nothing could equal her aſtoniſhment at this news, as ſhe thought, from their long and ſincere friendſhip, Maria had not behaved with her uſual generoſity, in concealing it from her, which ſhe had intirely done, except giving her the hint, which the reader may remember, in her laſt letter,

ter, and which could refer to nothing elſe; nor was this thought confin'd to her own breaſt, ſhe ſoon found an opportunity of taxing her friend with unkindneſs, who immediately related to her, all that the reader has before heard; as likewiſe, her intended ſcheme.—Æmily knew it would be to no purpoſe to diſſuade her from it; and as Maria had put ſo much confidence in her, by truſting her with a ſecret of this nature, ſhe could not, in honour, divulge it to Sir Thomas, of which, at firſt, ſhe had ſome deſign; ſhe therefore, though without the leaſt hopes of its ſucceſs, ſeem'd to acquieſce therein, and promis'd to do all in her power towards the execution of it.—Charlotte Howard was the next day made acquainted with the arrival of their mutual friend Æmily, and at the earneſt requeſt of both, added one more to this

happy

happy circle, for tho' Sir Thomas had dropp'd all acquaintance with Melvill, ſtill this did not alter his behaviour to, or diminiſh his regard for the reſt of Mr. Howard's family.

CHAP. XVIII.

——————— Underſtand more clear
What's paſt and what's to come, is ſtrew'd with huſks
And formleſs ruin of oblivion.

TROILUS and CRESSIDA.

THE neceſſary preparations for Maria's wedding were immediately begun, and Clunch ſpent as much of his time as he could ſpare from his ruſtic amuſements, at Oak-hall with his intended bride, who received his viſits

with great ſeeming complacence, conſcious that they could be of no long continuance. When ſhe was not thus employed, ſhe had the felicity of enjoying the company of her two friends, without controul; and indeed the affection which theſe young ladies had mutually for each other, made their time to paſs with the greateſt ſocial harmony; every day brought with it ſome new pleaſure; and, as the ſureſt means of augmenting their feſtivity, each of them ſeem'd more aſſiduous to promote the bliſs of the other two than her own. A ſigh, indeed, would ſometimes unwarily eſcape from poor Maria; who, as the deſtin'd day drew nigh, ſeemed every moment to loſe ſome of her reſolution; to add to which, her friend Charlotte (on the day before the intended marriage) for reaſons very apparent, made an excuſe to return home;

by

by that means avoiding being preſent at the propoſed nuptials.

During this young lady's ſtay at Oak-hall, poor Melvill's time had paſſed but heavily; however, to compenſate for all his torments, ſhe brought him a letter from Maria, containing freſh aſſurances of regard; which, when he received, in an involuntary extaſy, he exclaimed;

Sweet love! ſweet lines! ſweet life!
Here is her hand, the agent of her heart,
Here is her oath for love, her honour's pawn,
Oh, that her father would approve our loves,
To ſeal our happineſs with his conſent!
Oh, heavenly Maria!

As it was agreed on, that Melvill ſhould leave England, as ſoon as he had gained a promiſe from Sir Thomas to conſent to their marriage when he came

of age; he had taken care to prepare every thing neceſſary for his voyage: nor indeed was he diſpleaſed at thus having a plea to ſatisfy his eager curioſity, by viſiting foreign countries, tho' at the price of being ſeparated from Maria. And when the deſtined morn arriv'd, he haſtened to the church, where the other company were already aſſembled; conſiſting of the intended bride and bridegroom, Æmily Summers, Sir Thomas and Lady Hartry, and Sir Toby Clunch: Maria trembled with apprehenſion; but that only ſerv'd to caſt an unuſual glow upon her countenance, and made her look uncommonly beautiful; nor was her concern on ſuch an occaſion taken notice of, as a modeſt diffidence is uſual.

Although Melvill ſtood a great way behind the reſt of the company, he

could not avoid the eyes of Sir Thomas, who thought it not a little extraordinary for him to be there; however, ſtill keeping his poſt, he ſtood agitated by violent hopes and fears. Maria went through the former part of the ceremony tolerably well, till the critical minute arrived: and here I fain would conceal the weakneſs of my heroine; but truth obliges me to maintain my character, and inform my readers of every particular, without ſuppreſſing any. Judge then, if you poſſibly can, kind reader, what were poor Melvill's ſenſations, when, on her being aſked the important queſtion, after near a minute's ſilence, he heard her feebly pronounce, I WILL; his aſtoniſhment and rage for ſome time, were both ſo great, that he ſtood motionleſs; at laſt, caſting at her a look of diſtraction, he hurried out of the church, and throw-

ing himſelf into a poſt chaiſe, which had been order'd to wait for him, proceeded to Mr. Howard's, to whom in a few minutes he related what had happened, and ſet out the next day for Dover, but with a far different opinion of the female ſex, than what he flattered himſelf he ſhould have begun his travels with: thoughts of himſelf alone had for ſome time occupied his mind; but anger againſt Maria now took its place, which he vented as follows, "Yes, I "have long been blinded by paſſion, "but that at laſt is over, my natural "reaſon has regain'd her power; and I "can now ſee, nay feel, what an abject "wretch he muſt be, who truſts his "happineſs in a woman's power; ſmil-"ing miſchiefs all, that crocodile-like, "flatter but to betray: thus then I diſ-"claim all thoughts of a ſerious con-"nection with any of the ſex; but why

"do

" do I ſtill talk of, or trouble myſelf " about her, ſhe is not worth a thought; " and I hope I ſhall get quite clear of " her idea before I reach Dover;"—on the Road to which place we muſt leave him, and return to ſee what happened at the church after his departure.

CHAP. XIX.

Why tell you me of moderation?
The grief is fine, full, perfect that I taſte,
And in its ſenſe is no leſs ſtrong, than that
Which cauſeth it. How can I moderate it?

TROILUS and CRESSIDA.

I Don't doubt but my young female readers (if any ſuch I am honoured with) will all be apt to condemn and deſpiſe poor Maria for want of fidelity, or rather of reſolution; but let them

conſider one minute, and make her caſe their own, and I am ſure their contempt will be converted into generoſity. A young lady, educated with ſo ſtrict a ſenſe of honour and truth as ſhe was, could not be guilty of ſuch premeditated deceit; the ſolemnity of the place, the awful grandeur of the ceremony, all, all forbad it; paſſion had before obſcur'd her reaſon, but it now juſtly appeared to her, like going to church with a deſign to utter a premeditated falſehood in the ſight of God: yet notwithſtanding all this, ſhe ſuffered the moſt painful conflict, before ſhe could ſo far let her virtue overcome her love; but when ſhe had thus nobly gain'd an aſcendancy over her paſſions, ſhe felt that innate ſatisfaction which conſcious virtue always does, on the performance of any good action; but that ſatisfaction was but of a very ſhort duration, and

inſtantly

inſtantly vaniſhed, when, on turning her head round, ſhe obſerved in Melvill's face, the diſtraction of his heart, and immediately after ſaw him leave the church; it was then the thoughts of having deceived him, and loſt him for ever, ruſh'd upon her mind in their full force; nay, even with aggravated circumſtances: this was far too much for her tender nature to ſupport; ſhe immediately fainted away, before the material parts of the ceremony were performed, and threw the whole church into confuſion: ſhe was carried home ſenſeleſs; but by being put to bed, and the application of proper remedies, ſoon came to herſelf.

Almoſt every one then preſent, put different conſtructions on this accident: No one except lady Hartry and Æmily were acquainted with the true cauſe;

they had as well as Maria obſerved Melvill, and, on his leaving the church in ſo extraordinary a manner, had too well gueſſed what were his intentions: to theſe, when alone, our afflicted heroine unburthened her full heart; and having made all the excuſes ſhe could think of, to palliate her infidelity, conjur'd her mother, as a proof of her ſympathetic feelings, to ſend to know what was become of Melvill: lady Hartry, with true maternal fondneſs, was ready to admit of any plea that her daughter could make, and joined with Æmily in aſſuring her, that ſhe thought her more worthy of pity than cenſure; after which ſhe mentioned her ſuſpicions of Melvill's being gone abroad, the better to prepare her for ſuch a ſtroke, in caſe it ſhould prove true, and promiſed to ſatisfy her curioſity, by ſending to Mr. Howard's immediately, which ſhe accordingly

cordingly did; and in return to her meſſage, had the mortification of hearing from Charlotte, that Melvill was by that time at Calais, having previous to his departure, inform'd Mr. Howard of that part of the affair, which was left untold by her, only becauſe ſhe was not acquainted with the iſſue of their ſcheme; that his intention was to endeavour, by a variety of objects, to drive from his mind, a woman, whom he no longer held worthy of a place in it; and laſtly, that he had promis'd to write when he arriv'd at Paris.—It was on this promiſe only, that lady Hartry ventur'd to inform her daughter of what ſhe had heard, which ſhe at length did, though with the greateſt caution and tenderneſs; gently breaking it to her, by almoſt imperceptible degrees, till ſhe had made her acquainted with the whole.

Altho'

Altho' poor Maria was very well prepar'd for this blow, and though it was no more than what ſhe might reaſonably expect, ſtill ſhe had flattered herſelf with the old proverb, *That while there's life, there's hope*; ſhe had flatter'd herſelf, that when Melvill's anger began to ſubſide, he would ſtay and ſee the end of ſo extraordinary an affair; that he would defer his journey, till he was thoroughly convinced of her infidelity:—he thought very juſtly, that nothing could be a ſtronger proof thereof, than thus giving herſelf to another before his face; his paſſion obſcur'd thoſe reaſons which aroſe ſo powerfully in her mind to countenance the act; thoſe reaſons laſted but ſo long, as while ſhe remain'd in that uncertainty of doubt and fear, but when the anſwer to her mother's note arriv'd, ſhe inſiſted on ſeeing it, which lady Hartry at firſt refuſ'd,

fus'd, as thinking one part thereof, not ſo proper for her peruſal; but as it is impoſſible long to maintain a denial of any thing to thoſe we love, Maria ſoon got the better, and by her victory was made completely miſerable; for tho' her mother had before inform'd her of every part thereof, ſtill ſhe had done it in a manner which gave her ſome ſmall gleam of hopes, and which, by the ſight of it, ſhe was convinc'd ſhe had no reaſon to indulge; for a long time after reading it, her mind was torn by the contrary paſſions of contempt, love and pity; ſometimes ſhe would rail at him for not waiting to ſee the event of an affair, which it ſo nearly concern'd him to be acquainted with; at others, ſhe would expreſs her commendations of him for thus behaving to a perſon who had uſed him ſo ſcandalouſly, and then would vent the moſt bitter invectives againſt herſelf;

herſelf; but as according to the natural order of things, the human conſtitution cannot long thus exiſt upon the ſtretch, in a ſhort time the agony of her mind affected the body, and threw her into a violent fever, in which ſhe quickly became delirious, and was continually calling on Melvill; ſometimes ſhe would talk to him as if he were preſent, at others, ſhe would fall into the moſt violent fits of paſſionate rage, and in this manner rave, till nature being almoſt exhauſted, a flood of tears came ſeaſonably to her relief.

Conſcious, that from her ſo often mentioning Melvill's name, Sir Thomas muſt imagine there was ſomething more at the bottom of this affair than he was acquainted with, lady Hartry, by the advice of Æmily, (who behav'd with more than common prudence, in ſuch

a

a ſcene of complicated diſtreſs) related to him all ſhe knew of the affair, kindly endeavouring to exempt poor Maria from as much blame as ſhe poſſibly could:—To her great joy, this news was received in a far different manner from what ſhe expected; for as ſoon as Sir Thomas knew the cauſe of his daughter's illneſs, he us'd every means in his power, to haſten her recovery; at her firſt interval of reaſon, with the moſt aſſiduous tenderneſs, he deſir'd her to compoſe her ſpirits, acknowledging, that he was convinc'd of the folly of his conduct, and determin'd no longer to oppoſe her happineſs; ſhe thank'd him for the kindneſs of his intention, adding, "how happy would this goodneſs once "have made me! now 'tis an aggrava-"tion of my ſorrow, and comes like a "reprieve when execution's paſt."

With

With all the affection of friendſhip, and, at the ſame time, with the unlimited extent of parental love, he us'd every argument he could think of, to palliate her grief; and as a proof of the ſincerity of his wiſhes for her happineſs, inſtantly wrote a letter to Melvill, (which he directed to the poſt houſe at Calais) acquainting him with the alteration of his ſentiments, and kindly re-inviting him to Oak-hall.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

——————— Nature craves
All dues be render'd to their owners! now
What nearer debt in all humanity,
Than daughter to the mother?

TROILUS and CRESSIDA.

AS Maria had now gain'd her father's conſent to an union, which, ſhe flatter'd herſelf, would one day take place; notwithſtanding the fears ſhe had, leſt Melvill ſhould meet abroad with ſome lady, whoſe beauty, join'd to her ill uſage, might eaſily efface all remembrance of her former kindneſs; the tranquility of her mind was ſoon in ſome degree reſtor'd, which, added to her youth and natural ſtrength, began to re-eſtabliſh her health; the roſes that ſo long had left her cheeks, began

now

now to recover their accuſtom'd bloom; and, as after a tedious gloomy winter, all nature gladdens at the approach of ſpring, ſo there was no one in the houſe, or neighbourhood, who did not really rejoice at Maria's recovery, which was in a ſhort time totally completed:—and thus the family at Oak-hall, (of which Æmily ſtill made one) all but Maria, regain'd their former ſerenity and peace.

When Mr. Clinch found that Sir Thomas was no longer an advocate for him with Maria, he was eaſily induc'd to retract his claim, and in a few weeks after, married the daughter of one of his father's tenants, with whom he probably found more real happineſs, than ever he could have done with a perſon, whoſe ſentiments and purſuits were ſo widely different from his own.

As

As Sir Henry Summers had now been abſent much longer than he at firſt intended, Æmily began to be not a little ſurprized thereat, as well as puzzled, to find out what buſineſs he could have there to detain him ſo long; nor could ſhe avoid obſerving, that he had never made mention of it in any one of his letters; however, as he wrote conſtantly to inform her of his welfare, and as Mr. Martin had in his laſt letter given her a hint of an intended viſit, ſhe was eaſily prevail'd upon by Maria to remain at Oak-hall; where, by their mutual deſire, Charlotte Howard now was.

Nothing therefore was wanting to complete the felicity of this family, but Melvill's return, which Maria had waited for, ſome time, with the greateſt reſignation and patience; but when the period was elapſed, whereat ſhe had

flattered

flattered herſelf with the pleaſing expectation of beholding him, and in which ſhe was moſt grievouſly diſappointed, her former uneaſineſs began to return, and from the natural inclination which ſhe had for ſolitude, ſoon ſettled into a melancholy deſpondence, when, as if adverſe fate had not already ſufficiently tormented her, Mr. Howard received a letter from Melvill, wherein he inform'd him,—"That he had juſt recovered from a violent fit of illneſs, and was preparing to leave Paris (where he then was) in order to viſit Madrid; that it ſtill remained his firm reſolve to endeavour, by a quick ſucceſſion of new objects, to recall his heart from Oakhall; that as he ſhould be continually upon the move, it would be impoſſible for him to hear from England; his deſign in which was, to avoid ſeeing the very name of Hartry, that nothing might

might retard the cure he hoped in a ſhort time to work in his miſplaced affections."

It was very apparent from this, that he had never received the letter Sir Thomas ſent after him to Calais; and altho' the news pierc'd poor Maria to the heart, yet ſtill, to oblige her parents, ſhe endeavoured to aſſume the placid ſmiles of cool indifference: Oh, what a painful taſk to wear a chearful countenance with a gloomy heart!—Out of duty and complaiſance to them ſhe entred into company, though at the ſame time ſhe longed to be alone, to indulge her melancholy reflections on this unfortunate affair, which was the more ſo to her, as ſhe could blame no one for it but herſelf: her two boſom friends, Æmily and Charlotte, endeavoured all in their power to comfort her, the latter of whoſe

whoſe company ſhe was remarkably fond of, as ſhe knew by fatal experience the torments of divided love, and would ſometimes humour her affliction, by talking of Melvill, in return for which, Maria would ſympathize with her in her grief, for the long, long loſt Charles Hartry; in this manner, by each having a friend to ſhare in their afflictions, the burthen lay the lighter upon either: —But as theſe reflections will not deliver poor Maria from her miſerable ſituation; and, as I at preſent ſee no probable means of doing it, I muſt be contented to leave her as ſhe is, and take ſome further notice of Æmily's affairs.

It was now in the delightful month of May, about ſix in the evening, while our female friends were ſitting in a natural alcove, form'd by ſurrounding jeſſamines

jeſſamines and woodbines, their attention abſorb'd, in liſtening to a natural concert of the feather'd choriſters around, ſuperior far to any which the rigid rules of art can dictate, when they were ſuddenly ſurprized by the appearance of a gentleman, whom, on his nearer approach, Æmily diſcovered to be no other than Mr. Martin; who, to add to her joy, inform'd her, that her uncle would be there the enſuing morning: the firſt ſalutations were ſcarce over, before Charlotte and Maria took an opportunity of leaving their friend to enjoy, without reſerve, the company of that man, for whom alone ſhe ſeem'd to wiſh to live: Æmily ſaw, or at leaſt fancied ſhe ſaw, an unuſual ſerioufneſs painted on his countenance, nor could ſhe forbear aſking him the reaſon; but he evaded an explanation, by the weak excuſe of being fatigued by his journey; though

though this was not the real cauſe, as the reader will preſently be convinced. —The next morning, agreeable to what Mr. Martin had told her, Æmily had the ſatisfaction of embracing her uncle; who, in a ſhort time after his arrival, not a little aſtoniſh'd her by the following diſcourſe.

" It may not now (my dear Æmily) " be improper to acquaint you with the " cauſe of my ſo ſudden expedition, at " which I don't doubt you were very " much ſurprized; but I am ſure you " will be much more ſo, when, pre- " vious to what I have to ſay, I muſt " aſſure you, that you are not my niece; " nor did I, till within this ſhort time, " know any relation you had in the " world." — Æmily's ſurprize at hearing this piece of news, may be much better imagined than deſcribed; however,

ever, as no words could convey a proper idea of her aſtoniſhment, ſhe ſat ſilent, and ſuffered Sir Harry to proceed without interruption.—He had informed Martin (who was then preſent) of this affair before; and indeed this was the cauſe of that inquietude which Æmily had taken notice of the preceding evening; for when he found there were no ties of kindred between Sir Harry and his ward, and ſtill heard the warm manner in which he ſpoke of her, he began to be under ſome apprehenſions, leſt in his old age he ſhould play the fool, by ſinging amorous ditties to the bloom of nineteen; ſo ready are we to ſurmiſe whatever our fear dictates.—Sir Harry now related to Æmily all the circumſtances relative to his finding her, that the reader has before heard in the former part of this hiſtory; and then proceeded as follows.

" Soon after this extraordinary affair
" happened, I was telling to a circle of
" gentlemen, none of whom choſe to
" believe me, but all perſiſted in attri-
" buting to me a larger ſhare thereof
" than I had any right to.—And altho'
" I then, and ever ſince have uſed all
" poſſible means to diſcover your pa-
" rents, it has been to no purpoſe; till
" a ſhort time ago an intimate acquaint-
" ance, one of thoſe to whom I had
" mentioned the circumſtance, and now
" reſiding in Ireland, ſent me word,
" that he had diſcovered the parent of
" my Æmily; and if I wiſh'd to be
" fully ſatisfied thereof, deſired my im-
" mediate attendance at Dublin.—You
" may eaſily imagine that I did not
" heſitate one moment what ſtep to
" take; the hurry of my departure will
" ſufficiently evince to you, the eager-
" neſs of my curioſity.—On my arrival

" in

" in Dublin, my friend, at whoſe deſire
" I had made the journey, informed
" me, that he had met with the lady,
" concerning whom he wrote to me,
" after the following manner; by the
" accidental misfortune of her foot's
" ſlipping, ſhe had fallen down in the
" ſtreet, had he not, by the greateſt
" good luck, been behind her, and
" offering his arm, immediately led
" her into an adjoining ſhop: when ſhe
" was a little recovered from the fright
" which this accident had thrown her
" into, ſhe found that ſhe had happily
" received no other hurt, than a ſlight
" ſcratch on the hand by a poſt, on
" which ſhe had endeavoured to ſave
" herſelf from falling; when, on taking
" out her pocket book, to ſearch for a
" bit of ſticking plaiſter to apply to the
" wound, an open paper fell out, which
" he picked up and gave her, though

" he could not avoid firſt reading it as
" he held it in his hand, having ſeen
" ſome words he recollected elſewhere;
" and was amazed to find it contained
" the ſame words, as that which I diſ-
" covered pinn'd upon your breaſt, and
" which I had frequently ſhewn him.—
" So extraordinary a circumſtance a-
" wakened his curioſity; and in the way
" to her lodgings, where common civi-
" lity oblig'd him to attend her, with
" many apologies for the queſtion, he
" begg'd to know on what occaſion
" thoſe words were wrote, and, as he
" aſſured her, that he had other motives
" than curioſity for his inquiry, ſhe
" readily ſatisfied him; at the ſame
" time, giving him the hiſtory of her
" life, from which he was convinced
" it could be no other than your mo-
" ther.—At my deſire he immediately
" introduced me to her; and having

" before

" before informed her, what ſhare I had
" in the buſineſs, ſhe was as eager to
" relate, as I was to hear, the ſtory of
" her woe; though both our deſires
" ſprung from different motives; mine,
" from the hopes of making a worthy
" woman happy (for ſuch, from my
" friend's account, I was ſure ſhe muſt
" be) by delivering to her arms a daugh-
" ter, whom a monarch might boaſt of;
" and hers, from the expectation of be-
" coming a joyful mother, at a time
" when ſhe had ſo little reaſon to look
" for ſuch a bleſſing:" She therefore ſatisfied my curioſity, as follows.

CHAP. XXI.

—Virtue, tho' of winds and waves the ſport,
By paſſions ſhaken, and by dangers croſt,
On life's great ſea, is never wholly loſt;
Some power divine conducts her ſwelling ſails,
And, of her due reward, ſhe ſeldom fails.

The SCHOOL for RAKES.

BORN and bred in retirement and eaſe, at more than a hundred miles diſtance from the capital of England, my youthful days were paſs'd in one continued round of innocent amuſements; educated under the foſtering wing of indulgent parents, whoſe utmoſt wiſhes were their childrens happineſs: my inclinations never learnt to ſtray, but where my duty led them; the ſmiles of benignity ſat upon my youthful countenance, every circumſtance of life

life conſpir'd to make me bleſs'd:—I had a brother whom I lov'd dearly as myſelf; and as our ages were nearly equal, our ſtudies and purſuits were made ſo too, under that man, who was at once our tutor and our parent;—I read the Claſſics and learnt French with him, and in return, he was ſometimes permitted to take a leſſon on the guittar with me; but as we were only ſuffer'd to uſe theſe as amuſements at our leiſure hours, by thus being taught to conſider in the light of indulgences, what were really edifying and uſeful ſtudies, we of courſe made much more progreſs therein than if we had look'd upon them as inflicted taſks, which we were obliged to perform.

As my father's eſtate was not ſufficient to enable him to bring up my brother independent of the world, he

gave him leave to chuſe his profeſſion, when pitching on the army, he immediately bought him a commiſſion in the firſt regiment of guards, and ſent him to London, to perform the duty which he ow'd his king and country, not without many tears on both ſides, at his departure.—You may eaſily imagine, how much I felt for the loſs of a brother, whom I lov'd with ſuch tenderneſs; but as he promis'd to write to me frequently, by the alternate aſſiſtance of my books and my guittar, I made a ſhift to ſupport at leaſt the appearance of tolerable ſpirits; tho' I will own, I felt this blow more ſeverely than I dar'd then confeſs;—but as the All-wiſe being never does any thing without propoſing ſome end thereby, ſo this had one great good attending it; for as I have ſince found, by fatal experience, that I was born to undergo many misfortunes,—

this,

this, ſo early in life, ſerv'd to inure me to what I ſince have ſuffer'd; and what was then the cauſe of ſo much affliction to me, on a cool retroſpection, appears to be nothing, in compariſon of what I ſince have felt:—for thus we always ſwell our preſent pain, till ſome ſeverer grief arrives, which ſhews what's paſt, without extenuation or increaſe, in its true light.

I thus give you the hiſtory of my family, becauſe in my brother's, my own is included.—About a year after his departure, he inform'd us by letter, of an intended viſit, having obtain'd leave of abſence for three months; and that he ſhould bring a particular acquaintance, who was a brother officer, with him:—accordingly, in a few days he arriv'd, attended by his friend, whoſe name was Modiſh: this gentleman, who

was a lieutenant as well as my brother, ſeem'd by nature form'd to pleaſe the women; had I ſaid for their deſtruction, my own circumſtances would too fatally juſtify the expreſſion, as I can with truth affirm, that I have never felt the influence of joy, ſince firſt I knew him; but ſtill I don't repent of my acquaintance; for whereſoe'er he is, may heav'n protect him!—he had not been long at my father's, before his behaviour too plainly convinc'd me of his ſentiments; in ſhort, he ſoon found an opportunity of declaring his paſſion for me, in the warmeſt terms; nor will I pretend to play the hypocrite, by ſaying I was diſpleas'd at it: and though prudence (as he had no fortune, but the income of his commiſſion) would not ſuffer me to receive his addreſſes openly, as it would have been madneſs in me, to have imagin'd that my father ever would agree to the match,

match, yet in private I gave him all the encouragement that modeſty would allow of, or his generoſity have aſk'd.

I was now one-and-twenty, and had juſt receiv'd a thouſand pounds left me by an uncle, and which was all the fortune I had independent of my father; and, in ſhort, Sir, my affection for him was ſo deeply rooted, that he too eaſily prevail'd upon me to fly from the beſt of of parents, and receive him as a huſband:—he then wrote to my brother, acquainting him therewith, and deſiring him to break the affair to my father, and intreat his forgiveneſs; after which we proceeded to London, where we waited for ſome time, in daily expectation of an anſwer, but were amaz'd to find ourſelves diſappointed, eſpecially as Mr. Modiſh had had the precaution to deſire my brother to direct to him at a cer-

a certain coffee-houſe; thither he went every day, but every day had the mortification of a diſappointment:—and although my huſband's regard for me, ſeem'd every moment to increaſe; in ſuch a ſituation, I was far from being happy:—the conſideration of being neglectfully deſerted by my parents, and all that my ſoul held dear in the world, except the partner of my heart, was too tormenting a thought for me not to be ſenſibly afflicted with.—We had been in town about two months, when the following misfortune happen'd to deprive me even of the pleaſure which my huſband's company afforded.

He was returning home one night from the coffee-houſe, about twelve o'clock, elevated in liquor, when a perſon from behind, gave him a ſlap on the ſhoulder.—Imagining he was beſet by foot-

foot-pads, turning ſuddenly round, he fired one of the piſtols which he always carried about him, and inſtantly ſaw the perſon who had thus attack'd him, fall to the ground.—A crowd of watchmen immediately aſſembled, drawn thither by the report of his piſtol,—but—good heavens!—what was his conſternation, when he found the perſon he had ſhot, to be no other than my brother, and whoſe ſlap on the ſhoulder, which was a mark of familiarity and affection, had been thus fatally miſconſtrued.—Concluding that he had certainly kill'd him, under a pretence of fetching a ſurgeon he ran home, and informing me of this melancholy accident, took half my fortune, which luckily was in the houſe, and tenderly embracing me, hurried away to preſerve himſelf.

As he ſuſpected, ſo it happen'd, for my brother died in leſs than an hour, and rewards were immediately adver-tis'd for the apprehenſion of his mur-derer:—oh, Sir! think what a ſituation this was;—in one ſad hour, depriv'd of all my future proſpects of felicity,—my deareſt brother dead;—my huſband flown I knew not where, and ſtigma-tiz'd as his deſtroyer;—hourly branded with the name of villain, for as no one knew the truth of this affair, every time it was told, added to his diſcredit, and it at laſt reach'd my father's ears; maim'd and villainouſly wreſted every way to ſuit the purpoſes of avaricious relations; ſo that all he heard was, "that my huſband was the murderer "of his ſon."

According to the cruel expectation of the malicious propagators of this re-port,

port, he ſoon died:—nor did my mother long ſurvive, both their ends being not a little haſtened by this misfortune. Thus, Sir, was almoſt the whole family at once annihilated, by an accidental error; into which the beſt of men might eaſily have fallen.

In this accumulated diſtreſs, I had no friend to comfort or aſſiſt me, and though Mr. Modiſh had promis'd to inform me of his fate, I ſtill remain'd entirely ignorant thereof, having never once heard from him ſince his departure; when, to crown all my miſery, I found myſelf with child:—although I had a pretty large ſum of money left, it was daily diminiſhing, and as I had no proſpect of getting more, I even then began to anticipate the tortures of poverty.—At the uſual time, I was brought to bed of a daughter; and,

about

about ſix weeks after my delivery, had the luck of meeting with a lady, who had generoſity enough to believe my ſtory, and humanity enough to promiſe to aſſiſt me; nor did ſhe fail to keep her word: in a few days after, ſhe told me that a widow lady, to whom ſhe had mention'd my misfortunes, had kindly offer'd to take me with her to Ireland as a companion, but that my having a child was an inſurmountable obſtacle,—and now, Sir, ſhall I not forfeit your good opinion? by owning, that by the melancholy proſpect before me, I was drove to make uſe of the following ſtratagem:—having frequently heard your character for humanity extoll'd, I convey'd my little darling to a place where I fancied you were ſure of ſeeing her, with a paper pinned upon her breaſt, on which I wrote theſe words.——

Unknown ſtranger, whoſoe'er thou art that find'ſt

find'ſt this luckleſs babe, ſhut not your ears againſt the tender cries of youthful innocence, but pity, cheriſh, and receive her; in return for which, ſhe will far o'erpay your generous care, by her endearing prattle.— Having heard, that according to my expectations, you had taken her into your houſe, I was much pleas'd at the ſucceſs of my ſcheme, and with joy ſet out for Ireland, though it was not a little allay'd, by my never having heard from Mr. Modiſh, who had now been gone near a year: — in ſhort, Sir, not to trouble you with any unneceſſary particulars, I remain'd here with my patroneſs, till her death, which happen'd about half a year ago, when in return for my ſervices, ſhe left me her whole fortune, amounting to near ten thouſand pounds; and being thereby put into a ſtation of life, ſuperior to my utmoſt wiſhes, I was preparing to ſet out

for

for England, to make enquiries after my daughter, when I learnt accidentally from this gentleman, what was her ſituation in the world: and now, Sir, there is nothing wanting to complete my felicity, but ſome tidings of Mr. Modiſh, of whoſe fate I am entirely ignorant, though he has been abſent near twenty years.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

The boaſt of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that honours, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour;
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

GRAY'S ELEGY.

THUS, continued Sir Harry, did Mrs. Modiſh fully ſatisfy me, with regard to her being the real parent of my adopted Æmily; I therefore brought her with me to London, where ſhe now is, and whither I don't doubt you will joyfully accompany me to-morrow, to pay your duty to a woman who is every way deſerving the title of your mother.—And altho', my Æmily, you are not my niece, nevertheleſs we are related, as I find your father was brother to my couſin Modiſh, whom you have often ſeen; and with whom (if the reader

der will revert to the fourth chapter) he will find Sir Harry had a diſcourſe on the ſubject of his behaviour to Æmily; when he endeavoured to diſſuade him from the noble and humane reſolution that he had made.—How little did he then know he was arguing againſt his own niece!—— I have alſo (added Sir Harry) ſince my return, on enquiring of my couſin concerning the fate of his brother, heard that he was loſt in his paſſage to Italy; for which place he had embarked to avoid the officers of juſtice.—As his marriage was an intire ſecret, he never had an opportunity of communicating it to his brother, who was then abroad; and who, till my information, never had the leaſt ſuſpicion thereof.——

On obſerving that Æmily could not refrain from tears, at hearing the fate

fate of that man to whom ſhe owed her birth; he ſaid, — "Indeed, my "dear, this ſorrow is unneceſſary, as "you never knew the perſon whoſe loſs "you are lamenting; and, as heaven "has been kind enough to reſtore to "you a parent, who, I am ſure, will "perform every duty, and amply ſup-"ply the place of both father and mo-"ther. — This, my Æmily, was the "only reaſon why I deſired you to de-"fer your marriage till after my re-"turn; for, as you have now a parent "to apply to, mine is but an aſſumed "authority; though I am convinced, "ſhe will readily give her conſent to "every thing which may contribute to "your happineſs."——

As Mr. Martin was now entirely delivered from thoſe apprehenſions, which we hinted at above, he ſoon recovered

recovered his uſual flow of ſpirits; and congratulated Æmily on her new acquiſition, in terms of the greateſt tenderneſs; as did the reſt of the family at Oak-hall; who were immediately made acquainted with this happy revolution. —Even poor Maria ſeem'd to forget the cauſe of her affliction, and ſhare in the general joy.—The next morning Sir Harry ſet out for London, attended by Martin and Æmily, though not without being firſt made to promiſe, that they would return with Mrs. Modiſh, and there celebrate the nuptials of her daughter.

To deſcribe the meeting between Æmily and her mother, would require the efforts of a ſtronger pen, than my poor inexperience is maſter of; let it ſuffice to ſay, that each was highly pleaſed with the acquiſition of ſo deſerv-

ing

ing a relation; and that this lady readily conſented to her daughter's marriage with Mr. Martin, whom ſhe from that moment conſidered as her ſon.——Sir Henry having generouſly preſented his adopted child with ten thouſand pounds, theſe happy people, accompanied by Mrs. Modiſh, returned to Sir Thomas Hartry's, where, in a ſhort time, Martin's happineſs was completed, by being put in poſſeſſion of the truly amiable Æmily.

Although Maria, out of regard for her friend, could not refuſe being preſent at the wedding, the reader may imagine how much this renew'd her grief; the thoughts of having lately been to the ſame church, on ſo different an occaſion, and the melancholy circumſtances attending it; all ſerv'd to revive that ſorrow, the firſt tumults of which

which were as yet ſcarcely ſubſided; and though her breaſt at this juncture, was truly the ſeat of mourning and affliction, on her face ſhe wore apparent marks of joy: thus then, all were, or at leaſt ſeemed happy. —— Sincerity and affection here went hand in hand, and cordially embrac'd each other:— but mark the mutability of all human affairs,—oh, vain man! who can controul his fate? or dare to ſay, — *To-morrow is my own?* — The joy that this family might truly boaſt, — and the happineſs which fate ſeemed to have provided for them, for many years to come, were at once cruelly deſtroyed, by an accident as unforeſeen, as unprovided for.

The day after their marriage, Æmily propoſed a ride, which the unfortunate Martin too readily acquieſced in; and they

they were ſcarce got a hundred yards from the houſe, before her horſe took fright at ſome linen hanging on a hedge; when, not being the moſt expert horſe-woman, ſhe loſt her ſeat, and was thrown with the moſt violent force, with her head againſt the foot of a tree, from thence ſhe was taken up, and carried home ſpeechleſs:—On an examination of the wound by a ſurgeon, he declared it to be mortal. — Would to heav'n his report had been fallacious! —but as he foretold, in a few hours, the faireſt flower which earth ever ſaw, or heav'n ever deſtroyed, departed from a place where her felicity was but juſt begun!——Oh Providence! how unſearchable are all thy ways, when the very means that we contrive for our amuſements, are thus conducive to our deſtruction?—for, to add to the poignancy of this misfortune, Martin was

the firſt who, in order to amuſe Æmily, had inſiſted on her learning to ride.—How little did he then imagine the fatal conſequences, which were one day doom'd to attend it!—Common griefs admit of common palliative conſolations;—but alas, poor Martin! who ſhall ſpeak comfort to affliction great as thine?—in one ſad hour depriv'd of wife,—bride,—miſtreſs.——Let the Stoic, pamper'd with delicacies, from his bed of down, deſpiſe the pinching gripes attendant upon poverty;—then let him ſmile at misfortunes, and defy their point;—but ſhew me the man who, when the preſſing hand of ſtern adverſity is on him, will talk thus; who, when his heart is ſick with grief, and his eyes dim with tears, can ſtill preſerve his reſolution, and I will worſhip him like a deſcended angel.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

Can ſtoried urn, or animated buſt,
Back to its manſion call the fleeting breath?
Can honour's voice provoke the ſilent duſt?
Or flatt'ry ſooth the dull cold ear of death?

GRAY'S ELEGY.

SURE never yet was found ſuch a ſcene of complicated woe as we here meet with at Oak-hall!—at once daſh'd from the heighth of proſperity and happineſs, to the loweſt ſtep of miſery, that even premeditated malice could have contrived. — Poor Mrs. Modiſh!—no ſooner to be ſenſible of the ſoul-taught feelings of parental love, but thus to be obliged to feel the pangs of an eternal ſeparation!—See this, ye vain ones of the world, and learn how little value you ſhould ſet

upon your preſent happineſs, when you are thus liable every minute to be deprived thereof.—But to proceed.

The affliction of the company at Sir Thomas Hartry's on this occaſion, *beggars all deſcription.* — When their firſt ſhock was a little over, Sir Henry removed Mrs. Modiſh from a place, where every object ſerved but to renew her grief, by reminding her of her departed Æmily; but Martin inſiſted on ſtaying there, to mingle his tears with thoſe of the whole neighbourhood, till after her interment.—As this was too extraordinary an affair long to remain ſecret; the whole country were ſoon in tears, for the fate of the moſt deſerving woman of her early age. — This blow, added to thoſe ſhocks ſhe had lately received, had nearly been the occaſion of Maria's relapſe; but, by

by the friendly converſation of Charlotte, her mind was diverted from the continual contemplation of thoſe things which occaſion'd her grief.

Time, that alleviates moſt ſorrows, ſeemed but to increaſe that of Martin, who now determin'd to re-viſit London, a month having elaps'd ſince the burial of his Æmily; during which time, he had never fail'd daily watering her grave with his tears.—The evening before his departure, he went there alone; and, having ſpent ſome time in the contemplation of that ſpot, which contained all that his raviſh'd ſoul had once held dear, the following words burſt ſpontaneouſly from his lips:

"Huſh'd be each breeze!—ye warblers
"ſtop your throats,—for—ſhe is gone!
"—the faireſt flower of the creation is
"deſtroyed!——Death, like an un-

" timely froſt, has nipp'd thoſe beau-
" ties, which lately ſhone with ſuch
" diſtinguiſh'd excellence!——I never
" more ſhall hear the muſic of that
" voice,—that form no more ſhall bleſs
" my longing eyes!—Lay light upon
" her breaſt,——ye turf,——happier
" therein than I: — all nature's joyful
" ſave myſelf alone.—I wander inſen-
" ſible to all the ſweets around me;
" unknowing, and unknown, like our
" firſt parents when drove out of
" Eden; all that is paſt appears but
" like a dream, and all before me,
" dreary ſolitude.——Yet let me not
" complain; O Heav'n! thy ways are
" juſt; thou gaveſt and thou takeſt a-
" way."—So ſaying, he returned to the houſe; and according to his deſign, the next day ſet out for London. —I will therefore now take my leave of ſo melancholy a proſpect, and follow

Mr.

Mr. Melvill, whom I left in a poſt-chaiſe, on the road to Dover.

CHAP. XXIV.

That paſſion which harrows the ſoul,
By reaſon we ſtrive to remove;
But reaſon's too weak to controul
A paſſion ſo powerful as love.

The OPERA of TOM JONES.

ALTHOUGH Melvill (as has been before related) had thus with the moſt noble reſolution, hurried from the ſight of that perſon by whom he fancied himſelf ſo much injured; yet like the famous Greek of old, he bore the fatal arrow in his heart, and in an almoſt diſtracted ſtate, arriv'd at Dover

juſt as the packet was ſetting ſail for Calais, on which he embarked, and in a few hours reaching the end of his voyage, from thence proceeded with the utmoſt rapidity to Paris, where he had not long been, before the fatigue of travelling, to which he was ſo unaccuſtom'd, join'd to his uneaſineſs of mind about Maria, whom (however he might flatter himſelf) he could not ſo ſoon forget; threw him (as the reader has before heard) into a violent fever.

This was a moſt ſhocking ſituation for ſo young a traveller, confin'd to his bed in a ſtrange place, without an acquaintance to ſpeak to, or a friend to give him any aſſiſtance: he had juſt learnt French enough (while a boy) to aſk for what he wanted, but not to hold any converſation in the language; ſo that (if I may be allow'd the expreſſion)

all

all the intercourſe he could have, was with his own thoughts, and indeed he there found full employment;—he repeatedly curs'd the day of his nativity, and oftner that of his firſt acquaintance with Maria, as all the kindneſs ſhe had hitherto ſhewn him, ſerv'd but to make her infidelity appear the ſtronger, and in more deteſtable colours; of which, he ſometimes determin'd, on his recovery to return and accuſe her; but then he recollected, this would rather ſerve to increaſe, than heal his wounds, for as he was conſcious, that ſhe had ſtill the firm poſſeſſion of his heart, the thought of ſeeing her the wife of another, was more than he could bear.

During his illneſs, as his only amuſement, he had recourſe to reading, but not underſtanding French ſufficiently to read in that language, and as the Engliſh

books he there met with, were very indifferent, his ſtudies gave him but little ſatisfaction:—he by chance met with the following ode, with which he was highly delighted, as being ſo conformable to himſelf.

ODE

* ODE to DEATH.

I.

Oh death, thou gentle end of human pain,
Why is thy ſtroke ſo long delay'd?
Why, to a wretch who breathes but to complain,
Doſt thou refuſe thy welcome aid?
Still wilt thou fly the plaintive voice of woe?
And where thou'rt dreaded, only aim the blow.

II.

Oh leave, fantaſtick tyrant, leave
The young, the gay, the happy, and the free,
On them beſtow a ſhort reprieve,
And bend thy fatal ſhaft at me;
The beauteous bride, or blooming heir,
Let thy reſiſtleſs arrow ſpare,
And aim at this grief-wounded heart,
That ſprings half-way to meet the welcome dart.

III.

Still muſt I view, with ſtreaming eyes,
Another and another morn ariſe,
Are my days lengthen'd, to prolong my pain?
Enough of life's diſtreſs I've ſeen,
A finiſh'd wretch in youth's firſt bloom,
By early ſorrow, ripen'd for the tomb.

* The author does not preſent this ode to the publick as his own production, but as one of the moſt beautiful pieces of detach'd poetry, he ever remembers to have met with.

In

In this manner did he amuſe himſelf during his illneſs, which happily was of no long duration, for being conſcious that nature is her own phyſician, and, by having fair play, ſooner or later will effect a cure, he ſuffer'd her to take her regular courſe; and in a few days got well enough to ſatisfy his curioſity, by ſeeing every thing in Paris worthy the attention of a traveller:—he was a conſtant attendant at the comedy, the opera, and all publick places, in hopes by a diverſity of entertainments, to forget Maria, and for the minute in which his mind was engag'd by other objects, he ſucceeded; but the inſtant he was alone, his thoughts, as if by inſtinct, were at Oak-hall, and painted her to him, laughing at his ſufferings.

In this manner did he live for ſome time, daily undergoing the moſt excruciating

cruciating torments, till tir'd with the ſame rotundity of amuſements, which however pleaſing, by repetition will at laſt grow inſipid, he reſolved to viſit Spain, and immediately made the neceſſary preparations for his journey; but before I remove my reader from Paris, I cannot help mentioning an affair which happen'd to our hero during his ſtay there.

Having occaſion to hire a ſervant, he deſired the maſter of his hotel to recommend him one, and he accordingly the next morning introduc'd to him an Engliſhman, who being aſk'd by Melvill ſeveral queſtions concerning his reaſons for thus leaving England, gave the following whimſical relation of his own life; which, as he had a peculiar facetious manner of relating it, probably afforded more entertain-

ment

ment at the time, than my reader may now find in it.

CHAP. XXV.

To this one ſtandard, make your juſt appeal,
Here lies the golden ſecret, *learn to feel*;
Or fool, or monarch, happy, or diſtreſt,
No actor pleaſes, who is not poſſeſt.

LLOYD'S ACTOR.

AS you cannot poſſibly, Sir, diſprove or contradict any thing a ſtranger ſhall ſay of himſelf, it were as eaſy for me to make you believe I am the ſon of a *judge* as not, and indeed ſo I am; of as juſt and excellent a one, as any in the three kingdoms: — of horſes, — I mean; for as I acknowledge that old-

faſhion'd virtue "ſincerity," to be my characteriſtic, I muſt confeſs, that my father was oſtler at a large inn on the north road, and my mother, chamber-maid in the ſame houſe, both excellent in their reſpective ſtations, I aſſure you; —they no ſooner met, than they conceiv'd for each other a violent affection, the conſequence of which was, that ſhe prov'd with child; but my father ſoon making her an honeſt, virtuous woman, this character ſhe has maintain'd ever ſince, though I was born within two months after their marriage.—I was ſent to learn to read and write at a neighbouring charity-ſchool, in which accompliſhments, I made a ſurpriſing progreſs; and having finiſh'd my education, began to aſſiſt my father in his buſineſs; but this way of life, not at all ſuiting my romantic inclinations, for, as I knew myſelf (from hearing others

ſay

ſay ſo) to be a lad of parts, I could not bear to be obſcurely buried in a ſtable; but aſpir'd to much higher things: and, as a natural genius will never lie dormant, I gave very early proofs of mine, and proceeded with ſuch rapidity and ſucceſs, that at the age of fifteen, I was caſt for tranſportation, for robbing a hen-rooſt; but the judge taking pity of my youth, revers'd the ſentence, and order'd me to be whipp'd; after which correction, I was remanded to my old employment of — "a quar-"tern or half a peck,"—"eight-pence "half-penny,"—and—"I hope you'll "remember the oſtler, Sir."—In which way of life, I continu'd for ſome time, and being tir'd with bootleſs prayers to my father, that he would ſuffer me to viſit London, now determin'd to wait no longer for his permiſſion, which he ſtill obſtinately refus'd.

This

This I was urg'd to, not only from a natural deſire to ſee the world, but from having follow'd his example; in ſhort, a girl in the town was, or at leaſt ſaid ſhe was, with child by me, and as I had no reaſon to doubt the truth of her aſſertion, I thought flight the beſt method to eſcape the officers of juſtice, for whom I had conceiv'd a particular averſion, ever ſince the age of fifteen.

I had no ſooner projected this glorious ſcheme, than I put it into execution, and with a ſmall ſtock of cloaths, and leſs money, ſet out early one morning, without taking leave of any one except my Dulcinea, who, with tears in her eyes, (poor girl) begg'd me to deſiſt from my intention; but in vain. —I was adamant—ſteel—the glorious purpoſe of my mind was fix'd, nor was

I to be diverted from it, by the prayers and intreaties of a ſilly girl.

My violent inclination to ſee the world, made me with eaſe ſupport the fatigue of my firſt day's journey; but, in ſpite of ev'ry thing, nature will have her courſe: and I was very near ſinking beneath my burthen on the ſecond. My ſituation was truly critical; I longed to return, but my courage forbad it; to proceed was dangerous; but, as abſolute neceſſity obliged me to fix on ſomething, I was forced to put on the face of intrepidity, and proceed with all the ſtrength and ſpeed I was maſter of: tho', notwithſtanding my utmoſt endeavours, I could not reach the place I had deſtin'd for my that night's reſidence; but falling ſhort of it, at ſome miles diſtance in the ſkirts of a large town, juſt made ſhift to crawl to a neighbouring

neighbouring barn; on entering which, I was almoſt ſtruck dumb with aſtoniſhment at what I ſaw before me. In a corner, on one poor melancholy truſs of ſtraw, ſat a tall, genteeliſh woman; in her hands ſhe held an old ſcarlet coat, lin'd with blue, of which ſhe had turn'd the inſide out; and was induſtriouſly trimming it with white paper, in ſo artful a manner, as ingenuouſly to conceal all the patches, which, from length of time, and conſtant wear, were pretty numerous: near her was another woman, more inclining to the girl, in whoſe face were ſtrongly pictur'd all the marks of vanity: nor did her actions contradict my ſuſpicions; as ſhe was waſhing about ten or a dozen pieces of old lace, and ſome other ornamental trifles, which ſhe afterwards very curiouſly joined together, and made into a moſt ſuperb head-

head-dreſs, ſplendidly decorated with bits of Briſtol-ſtone, glaſs, &c. *thinly ſcattered to make up a ſhew*, to pleaſe that part of the world, whoſe ſole ambition is to feaſt their ſight. Not far from them, on the ground, lay two men, faſt lock'd in ſlumber, forgetting miſery; and, at a little diſtance, ſat a man and a woman; who, by the diſmal light of a ſingle ſolitary candle, were reading out of the ſame book: at the other end of the barn, was a perſon very buſy in ornamenting and fitting up, what I afterwards found to be the ſtage, where kings and princes march'd in all theatric pomp; though at that time it was occupied on one ſide, by a cow and a calf, and on the other, by two jack-aſſes. Notwithſtanding I had ſeen ſo very little of the world, I did not want to be informed, that theſe were a company of ſtrolling comedians, preparing for

for their next night's taſk. In a ſupplicating tone, I told them my ſtory, and begg'd leave to take up my lodging there for one night; they very humanely granted my requeſt; and having refreſhed me in a ſparing manner on bread and cheeſe, directed me to a vacant corner of the barn, where I lay down; and, overcome with my exceſſive fatigue, ſoon fell aſleep: in which happy ſtate I had been ſome hours, when I was awaked by a perſon crying in a hoarſe voice, *Why, this is well,—this is blow for blow.—Where! where!* interrupted I, riſing in a fright, imagining that ſome-body was fighting, and that this perſon was thus expreſſing his approbation of it; but they ſoon convinc'd me of my error, by informing me, that Mr. Rantum was only rehearſing the part of Zanga in the Revenge; which play was to be perform'd that evening

(as

(as the written bills ſpecified) by a company of performers from the theatres royal.

As I was naturally of a volatile diſpoſition, the drollery and variety of theſe people's lives pleas'd me ſo much, that I longed to become one of them; and therefore informed them, that I ſhould be glad to be engaged as a perſon, willing to do every thing in his power; and having in a ſhort time agreed on the terms, I was inrolled one of the company, with all the uſual forms. Agreeable to their deſign, the Revenge was that evening perform'd, with univerſal applauſe: the characters were, in general, what they call, well ſupported; but Zanga in particular, which Mr. Rantum play'd, to the admiration of thoſe who ſeem'd to underſtand him, and the utter aſtoniſhment

of

of thoſe who did not: he had formerly been at London, in Drury Lane Theatre, where he was employed in the characters of footmen, guards, &c. and I am even credibly informed, that he once play'd the part of a bear in a pantomime; but, be that as it may, it is certain that he ſtill retained ſo high an opinion of the London actors, that he copied one of them very minutely in the character of Zanga, as ſome critics ſaid, and roar'd ſo very loud, that he did not thoroughly recover the uſe of his ſpeech for three days afterwards.

There now open'd to me freſh ſcenes every day, of which I had not before (as indeed how ſhould I) the leaſt idea. —To recount to you the various intrigues that now preſented themſelves, eſpecially the amorous advances of Mrs.

Mrs. Faintwell, who took pains to inform me, that every young man who had a mind to ſucceed, ſhould form a connection with ſome lady of merit in the company; it would perhaps appear the effect of vanity, though moſt certainly Mrs. Faintwell, who was old enough to be my mother, and who had poſſeſſed eight real or nominal huſbands, abſolutely propoſed going by my name, that we might live, and taſte the ſweets, without the inconvenience of matrimony: —— to tell alſo the various ſhifts we were obliged to make, in the performance of our pieces, would appear romance; however, we gain'd conſiderable applauſe wherever we went: I ſay, *we*, becauſe I belonged to the company; though hitherto I had done nothing more than ſweep the ſtage, ſnuff the candles, ſwell'd the train of a theatric

prince,

prince, and walked in a white ſheet in Juliet's funeral proceſſion. I pin'd with envy, at ſeeing the applauſe and ſucceſs others met with, while I with my ſhining talents remain'd in diſmal obſcurity. However, conſcious of my own abilities, I began to think of appearing in ſome more elevated ſtation; and accordingly conſulted Mr. Rantum: of whom, before I proceed, it may be proper to ſay ſomething; the property of ſome daubed canvaſs, and tarniſhed tinſel cloaths, ſo much increaſed the natural pride of this important perſon, that he conſidered and uſed the members of his company as ſlaves; thieves to the men, and expreſſions equally groſs to the women, were common with him; and a very ſlight degree of contradiction could rouſe him to real knock-down arguments with his fiſt; ſuppoſing himſelf the beſt actor upon

earth, he could not bear the leaſt appearance of a ſlight; which occaſioned him once, in the character of Alexander, to deprive Hepheſtion of a tooth, for ſuppoſing he laughed at him; he was as ſelfiſh as proud, and took care, even when there was tolerable ſucceſs, to glean ſo much, under pretence of ſtock-debt, that the company were very little above begging; which occaſioned them to be very comical in tragedy, and ſad in comedy.

Upon application to our manager, he readily granted my requeſt; deſiring to know what I choſe to come out in. Being naturally of an aſpiring diſpoſition, and not in the leaſt doubting my tragical powers, I had preſolved, like the ſun from behind an obſcuring cloud, to break forth more glorious, for having been thus concealed;

cealed; and therefore pitch'd upon Jachimo, for my firſt attempt: Mr. Rantum ſaid, that I knew Cymbeline to be a play for which they were not at all prepared; and which would inevitably put them to great inconveniences in the performance; but that having conceived a regard for me, he would oblige me, by having it repreſented; and, as an additional proof he would play Leonatus Poſthumus. —— The parts therefore were accordingly caſt, and Mr. Rantum very kindly gave me ſome inſtructions, relative to my attitudes, voice, &c.

In leſs than a fortnight we were all ready for the rehearſal: and the bills gave notice of "Cymbeline to be per-"form'd, the part of Jachimo by a "young gentleman, being his firſt ap-"pearance on any ſtage."

This of courſe filled the theatre, *alias* the barn, with all the neighbouring families: and as the fatal hour drew nigh, when all my future fame was to be laid at ſtake, I felt myſelf in a ſituation not to be deſcribed. — The warning bell at length ringing,—I appear'd,—and the houſe re-ecchoed with applauſe: I went through the firſt act as well as could be expected; but when I ſtole an ineſtimable bracelet of black ribbond from Imogen's arm, who was repoſed on a white ſheet, laid over the ſkeleton box uſed in pantomime: the ſucceſs I met with, was inexpreſſible, beyond my moſt ſanguine expectations: her bed-chamber indeed, did not exactly anſwer that inimitable deſcription given of it, by the immortal Shakeſpeare; the hangings were not ſilver'd ſilk, proud Cleopatra when ſhe

ſhe met her Roman, but the patch work of the wainſcoat was concealed from enquiring eyes, by an old piece of tapeſtry, beautifully deſcribing the hiſtory of Saint George and the Dragon; thus you ſee, we endeavoured to come as near the original as poſſible: and our audience being kind enough, to take the will for the deed, the whole went off with an uncommon eclat.

And give me leave to obſerve, that till within theſe two years, when the managers of Covent Garden, have very judiciouſly had one painted on purpoſe; I have frequently known a ſcene exhibited in this excellent play, which had no more reſemblance to the deſcription given of it, in the ſubſequent act, than that which our itinerant company was obliged to make uſe of: neceſſity indeed was plea ſufficient for them; but

ſurely at the theatres royal, it is ſo great an abſurdity, and ſo glaring an affront offered to the underſtanding of the publick, as ſcarcely to be overlooked, or forgiven by any audience: for when we hear theſe beautiful lines,

——————————It was hang'd
With tapeſtry of ſilver'd ſilk; the ſtory
Proud Cleopatra, when ſhe met her Roman,
And Cyndus ſwell'd above the banks, or for
The preſs of boats, or pride, a piece of work
So bravely done, ſo rich, that it did ſtrive,
In workmanſhip and value; which I wonder'd
Could be ſo rarely, and exactly wrought,
Since the true life on't was——

CYMBELINE.

I ſay Sir, when we hear this glorious and animated deſcription, we naturally refer our ideas, to the ſcene of which it is ſpoken; but which upon recollection, we ſhall find, was ſomething ridiculouſly trifling,

trifling, and foreign to the purpoſe;—but to proceed,—in the battle ſcene, I likewiſe gain'd great honour, when ſtruck with the horrors of a guilty conſcience; my nerveleſs arm refus'd its office, and obliged me to yield to Poſthumus, his Romiſh weeds diſguis'd by a carter's frock; but at the concluſion, I will not ſay I deſerv'd, but I will venture to aſſure you, that I was loaded with vaſt applauſe; the men approv'd, and the women ſaid I was quite a charming creature: which to do Mr. Rantum juſtice, I muſt attribute to his teaching me the full uſe of my lungs, which were naturally ſtrong, diſmiſs'd me with their ecchoing hands.

Thus you ſee, on what trifling, inſignificant points, depends the fame of an actor, whoſe profeſſion is of all others, the moſt arduous and uncertain.

As

As I ſucceeded ſo happily in my firſt attempt; you may be ſure I did not ſtop there; and thinking (no doubt) that my comic powers, were equally good with my tragic: I determin'd my next appearance ſhould be in comedy; when fixing on Sir Harry Beagle, in the Jealous Wife, for my *coup d'eſſai*, came off as well as I had done in Jachimo; though to do my audience juſtice, I muſt own, that here for once in their lives, they were pleas'd with, and gave due praiſe to ſimple nature; for having been bred in a ſtable the greateſt part of my life, the ſmack of my whip, (which alone gain'd me great applauſe,) had from conſtant cuſtom, become ſo habitual, that very little art was requir'd to ſupport the character in a forcible manner.

Not

Not to take up too much of your time, I appeared in a variety of characters, and by an attention to ſuch trifling particularities, gained all the applauſe I wiſh'd for, and much more than I really deſerved; however, entering into a quarrel to ſupport the conſequence of my old lady, who at the age of fifty-ſix, with a moſt corpulent figure, wanted to play Juliet, and other girliſh parts; Mr. Rantum and I decided the matter by a bruiſing match, in which I came off victorious, but the vanquiſhed manager took his revenge by diſcharging me, and being hiſſed out of every company I afterwards attempted, it became neceſſary to accept the place of valet de chambre to a gentleman who was coming over to Paris; and where I had no doubt of finding employment; but being diſcharged by my maſter for attending the comedy inſtead

instead of him; to my great mortification, I am now convinc'd, that the French encourage no poor but their own; which has obliged me thus to offer my services to you, Sir, and by a pretty thorough knowledge of that great city, I hope to prove myself very useful.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

BRITISH MUSEUM FEES

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This is a very uſeful Publication, particularly at the preſent Period, when the Nature of our Conſtitution is ſo much the Subject of Animadverſion. The Author, together with the Original Charter, has given an Engliſh Tranſlation for the Benefit of his unlearned Readers, and a circumſtantial Account of the Manner in which this ſacred Palladium of Engliſh Freedom was originally obtained from King John. He completes the whole with an Eſſay on Parliaments from their Origin in England and their half yearly Exiſtence to their Septennial Duration, and diſplays no leſs an extenſive Fund of Knowledge, than a laudable Exactneſs in the Courſe of his Relation.